

# A Layman's Commentary On the Gospel of John

Dedicated  
for knowledge,  
understanding,  
and inspiration  
as we seek to follow  
Our Lord & Savior  
Jesus Christ.

Composed In 40 Lessons  
By T.O.D. Johnston

T.O.D. Johnston's Commentary on John

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T.O.D. Johnston's Commentary on John

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A Layman's Commentary  
On the Gospel of John:  
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2006

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Dedicated  
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T.O.D. Johnston's Commentary on John  
Preface

After reading many scholarly commentaries on different books of Scripture, it became my mental habit to sift through the minute discussions of individual words and/or phrases, and the quoting of various scholars of the past of many differing opinions, and center on the most logical and inspirational truths that remained. Thus I relied on the studied scholarship of those who had learned the original languages and had read all the previous scholars that had written to get the best possible understanding of Scripture that I, as a non-scholar, could. It seemed that most church members would not attempt to read scholarly works - but would benefit from their knowledge if presented in a plain and straightforward manner, the truths they had perceived. The following commentary is my attempt to do this. May God bless my efforts to the extent that they increase the understanding and faith of the reader.

T.O.D. Johnston  
2005

## Lesson I

### John 1:1-14 - Background.

Authorship - the early Church universally accepted the work as written by the Apostle John. The internal evidence held within the Gospel includes the following: the author was Jewish in language, following Jewish opinions of the time, the firm foundation in the Old Testament. He was clearly familiar with Palestine of the first century - many details of places and distances that are not mentioned by the other Gospels but obviously familiar to the Author. Many of the places in and around Jerusalem described were destroyed by 70 A.D. and no later writer could describe these locations. John mentions the names of those who asked important questions, and names uniquely Nicodemus, Lazarus, Simon the father of Judas Iscariot, and Malchus - and the relationship between Annas and Caiaphas.

Time - John mentions the specific feasts and Passovers, and certain days and even times of day, details of only an eyewitness. He also mentions details of number - six waterpots, five loaves, and two fish - 25 furlongs, four soldiers, five husbands, 38 years of illness.

Place - places are mentioned in connection with special acts and communications - as part of natural recollection

Manner of writing - with vivid touches of what was seen and heard by an observer.

The writer was an apostle - he intimately describes the feelings of the other disciples as well as the thoughts and feelings of Jesus.

He describes the writer as the disciple Jesus loved. Also, the close connection with Peter is recorded. The apostle John is not mentioned by name in this Gospel - the nameless disciple is in the place where John's name would have been.

The greatest direct evidence of John's authorship is found in John 21:24 where the writer records: "this is the disciple who witnesseth concerning these things, and who wrote these things; and we know his witness is true.", all referring back to "the beloved disciple".

What we know about John:

He was the younger son of Zebedee, James being the older son. His mother was Salome (Mark 15:40, 16:1). From John 19:25, it appears that Salome was the sister of Mary, the mother of Jesus. Thereby Jesus and John were cousins. John was younger than Jesus and the other apostles.

Nothing is recorded about Zebedee except that he was a fisherman in the neighborhood of Bethsaida and was doing well enough to have hired servants (Mark 1:20). Later Salome appears as one of the women who followed Jesus and "ministered to Him of their substance" (Mark 15:40, Luke 8:3).

With the exception of Judas Iscariot, all the apostles were

Lesson I continued

from Galilee. It is significant that this region was distant from the factions of political power struggles and the traditional speculations and opinions of the Pharisees and scribes of the religious schools centered in Jerusalem. Galileans had remained more grounded in simple faith and following the written Laws of Moses. We will learn a great deal more about John as we study His Gospel. (He is mentioned in Acts in Chapters 1, 3, & 8.) Tradition records him as staying at Ephesus to extreme old age.

In his introduction to Revelation, John writes of being on the island of Patmos. There are no firm traditions of his death - or of any dates recorded of when he left Jerusalem onward.

An interesting note - during the time John looked after Jesus' mother, he certainly talked to her concerning all of her memories about Jesus, thereby giving him a fuller knowledge of His earlier life - and many details that confirmed and fleshed out the things John had seen and heard himself.

This all adds up to a reliable witness of what he wrote: "We have seen and do testify." His words are trustworthy to confirm our faith in the life and words and finished work of Jesus the Messiah of God the Father.

John writes as the Witness to the Truth: Jesus is the Truth, revealing by His words and deeds the true nature of absolute love of the only true God.

To Pilate, Jesus revealed that He had come to bear witness to the truth. John the Baptist bore witness to the Truth. The work of the Holy Spirit is to reveal the Truth about Jesus - thus being the Spirit of Truth and is still the only source that man has to know and understand the whole and complete knowledge of Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God, the Savior, the Redeemer, Who brings inward power to the believer.

The certain witnesses to the Truth include the Father, Christ Himself, His works, the Holy Scriptures, the disciples, and the Spirit of Truth. The study of John will show the way and manner of all these witnesses.

John also brings out the concept of Light - Love being the way of illumination. Jesus came to bring the light to the life of men, that they may become sons of light - the end of which is judgment. Jesus is the Judge and His judgment is true. Judgment is the same as condemnation. Jesus' coming into the world forced all men to choose - to choose Jesus is life, to reject Him is judgment.

The way in which John follows his purpose shows how the divine nature of Jesus was revealed a little at a time to those who closely followed Him. They, by the teaching of the Spirit, came to understand that the Word had become flesh.

John records Jesus revealing His true divinity by 7 "I am" statements.

I am:	The Bread of life
	The Light of the world
	The Door of the shop
	The Good Shepherd

Lesson I continued

The Resurrection and the Life  
The Way, the Truth, and the Life  
The True Vine

In those days, the training of the disciple or pupil was to memorize the sayings of his teacher. John was such a pupil of Jesus. His experience in the life of the Early Church fulfilled the meaning of much of what Jesus had done, and said, and prophesied. The promised Holy Spirit had come to bring to his remembrance all things which Christ had spoken, and taught him all things.

In the discourses of Jesus, three main themes are seen: the mission of the Holy Spirit, the fact of Jesus' leaving the earth, and His coming again, and the relationship of the Church to the World. These teachings would only be truly understood in the time after the persecutions of the Jewish leaders, and after the fall of Jerusalem.

The Final discourses emphasize the commandments, the main one - to love one another. This comes from Christ's self-sacrifice - showing what the true relationship between people is supposed to be as originally designed by Our Creator. This is the foundation and the pattern to be followed.

To love Jesus is to keep His commandments. To keep His commandments is to love Him - Thereby abiding in Christ's love as He abides in the Father's love by keeping His commandments.

In relation to the Old Testament, John records the special privilege of the Jews as the inheritors of the Scriptures and their many prophecies and traditions, sacrifices and celebrations, that point to the coming Messiah; the foundation of faith as seen in Abraham, Moses and Isaiah. All things to train the nation to be prepared for Christ's coming. Also recorded are the misconceptions of the Jews when Christ came - about the Messiah and literal heritage of birth.

The New Dispensation as prophesied by the Old Testament was essentially a spiritual one. The reunion of man with God in Christ and the Gift of the Holy Spirit through Him.



## Lesson II

### Origins of the Word

In the first three verses of the Bible we are introduced to God. The word "God" is Elohim - the plural form, meaning more than one. The verb "created" is singular. This reveals the Trinity working as a single unit. God the Father, the conceiver and planner of the universe - from before the beginning until after the end of time as we know it. When God speaks - the Living Word of God (Jesus) becomes the spoken Word "God said". When the spoken Word of God was recorded, it became the written "Word of God" - the Holy Scripture.

Throughout the Old Testament, the Lord spoke to people, particularly the prophets. When they proclaimed their messages they began "Thus saith the Lord".

In the New Testament, John's Gospel begins with the same words at the beginning of Genesis. We are told in dramatically simple terms who the Word of God is - Jesus is the Living Word of God. He brought into existence all of creation. He came into a world of the darkness of sin and death. He brought life and light. The world, and creatures He created did not recognize Him. They had turned each to his own way, choosing darkness, for their deeds were evil.

Those who received Him, were given the adoption to become sons of God, joint heirs with Christ.

The eternal Son who called into existence all that is, and maintains it by the Word of His Power, lowered Himself to be born as a human child. His purpose - to bring to all people the message of the true desires of the Heart of the Father, to show by word and deed what the Father offered the world - love, forgiveness, adoption, reconciliation, a new and eternal relationship with Him through the Gift of His Son as the Suffering Servant who would die the death we deserved, so that we might live.

By means of the Spirit, the Living Word of God was recorded as the Written Word of God.

Throughout time, God has made Himself known throughout the beauty and complexity of the created universe, and by working out His will throughout human history. But above all, He has exalted the recording and preservation and dissemination of His Written Word. Why? Because it reveals His heart of love through His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. The greatest ministry of the Holy Spirit was to cause the Bible to be written. With the recording of the New Testament, the ministry became that of revealing Jesus to us through that Written Word - thereby making the Written Word spiritually discernable to people. The Holy Spirit imbues the Word with life and power. Jesus promises a life-union with anyone who keeps His words, by the Spirit of love which unites the Father and the Son.

Chapter 15:7 - "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

Do you have confidence in prayer - you can - just as the body needs food every day - so also does the spirit need the

Lesson II continued

nourishment of spiritual food, which is the Word of God. How do we abide in Christ - by spending time every day with Him in His Word, by the ministry of the Holy Spirit, this increases our knowledge, our understanding, our faith, our hope, and a deeper realization of how much God loves us.

This should naturally lead us into a life that glorifies the Father, the bearing of much fruit.

Chapter 15:8,9. How do we continue in Christ's love for us?

15:10. "If ye keep my commandments (or Words), ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in His love."

15:11. "These things have I spoken unto you that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."

For all who wish to find happiness, and remain happy - these words show the only way on this earth to achieve it. It is the complete opposite of the world's ways. The world proposes that the almighty Self must be the center of the universe, and that money, position, power, possessions, and the various lusts of the flesh being gratified will bring happiness. You could call this "The Big Lie". It sounds strangely like the offer of the serpent to Eve - "eating the forbidden fruit - it is good to eat, it looks good, it will bring you knowledge, to be like God."

Or as commonly expressed, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Or in one word, sin, the end of which is not happiness, but death.

The final commandment - Verse 12: "This is my commandment, that ye might love one another, as I have loved you."

Love here is an action word, not a mushy feeling in the tummy. It is an act of the will. To choose to love someone means to do and say things that are for the best interest of that other person, to give, to share, to build up, to help fulfill their needs and desires.

We must look at others through the eyes of Jesus. While we were yet sinners, and unlovable, Jesus chose to love us by fulfilling our greatest need - forgiveness for our sins. So also we are called up to give, reach out, share our faith with even those that are yet sinners, in sadness, illness, with the hungry, the homeless, the criminal, or any person whatever their circumstance. What is the greatest gift we have to share. The gift we have received - salvation through Jesus. That is not to say that we should neglect sharing whatever else is needed - by that sharing, a way is opened for them to be receptive of the greatest gift - the only one that lasts for eternity.

Thus is shown the truth, the way, and the Life as recorded in Scripture - by the ministry of the Holy Spirit. The Written Word of God is brought to life in our hearts - revealing to us the Living Word of God, Jesus Christ Our Lord. This begins a relationship of love - between us and God the Father, through the gift of the Son and the indwelling Spirit. The bond is unbreakable, eternal, closer than any other, and more certain than anything on this earth. How do we know?

Lesson II continued

The Word of God tells us. This word is truth, this word is life, this word is love.

This we must share with all those we come in contact with. It is the most important thing we have - therefore, the greatest gift we can give, as was freely by grace given to us.

### Lesson III

John 1:1-18. Part 1 - Summary Statements. (Part 2 will be the details.)

- "1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- 2 The same was in the beginning with God.
- 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.
- 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.
- 5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.
- 6 ¶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.
- 7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.
- 8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.
- 9 ¶ That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.
- 10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.
- 11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.
- 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:
- 13 which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
- 14 ¶ And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.
- 15 John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me; for he was before me.
- 16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.
- 17 For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.
- 18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

In these opening verses John states what he understands to be the whole truth about Jesus Christ the Son of God. All that follows gives the evidence that proves the veracity of these declarations.

Verse 1. In the beginning was the Word - The Creator thought; His thought is expressed in Words; the Words become things. This Word 'was' with God and was God. The verb 'was' signifies the imperfect tense or time. It describes something that began in the past and is continuing and constant - not something existing in the past, or present, or future, but completely outside of time.

This statement we have to accept on faith, because our finite minds are not able to understand the spiritual vastness and

### Lesson III continued

complexity of its true nature. When we are all with Jesus and the Father in Heaven, then all will become clear. This verse has been described as the law and nature of all existence.

A major change in the description of the Word comes in verse 14 - The Word 'became'. This explains that the already existing Word changes in manifestation. The Word became and dwelt. The Word became flesh - covering the whole nature of man and that flesh lived among us - yet a new thing is seen in that life - "full of grace and truth."

Paul describes this as Jesus "Emptied Himself, taking the form of a Servant, made in the likeness of men - from timeless existence to a fleshly existence.

All of the things intimated in verse 1 now became visible and more understandable. The truth of God was now observable in Jesus, "full of Grace and Truth."

Without this revelation, no one could really discover what God was like or what God desired toward man. Jesus declared God to man, He the only begotten Son - in the very heart of the Father, hath shown the Father. Not the Wisdom or the Power or the Majesty of God - but the will and desire of the love of the Father hath Jesus shown. He brings forth (declared) to be visible that which was already existing but not seen or understood before.

It is Jesus and only Jesus who could and did show the truth about God to man. It is only Jesus who has been with the Father that can show us what the Father is like.

The details: verses 2-13, 14, 15-17

Part 2 - The details.

Verses 2-17. Outline I. 2 Creations and the Word. (2-5)

II. How the Word was looked at. (6-13)

III. 2 Witnesses to the Word.

Through the action of the Word, all things were created and all progression from that creation also was through Him, and He also holds all things together both now and forevermore. In Him is All life, therefore all life is from Him. Only man, out of all this worldly creation, has the ability to see this light, to comprehend and communicate with God.

The word "darkness" describes the fact of human sin as seen all through human history. However, the light shines everywhere and the darkness will never affect the light.

Men choose to walk in darkness. God places in us all a consciousness of things as right or wrong; this is described as the Lamp of God, and it is never extinguished.

Verse 6. John then proceeds to the next stage - "There came a man" sent from God, named John. He was sent as a witness to the light - to call people to believe in the Light - the Light coming into the world as visible, observable, to be sought and followed. He came into the world, He created and yet the world knew Him not. People He created would not receive Him.

Lesson III continued

John's preaching went beyond the nation of Israel and their pride of descent from Abraham and their privileges and traditions. He preached repentance, that all men might believe. The object of faith - God made known in His Son. John called attention to the Light.

Verse 9. Men had manifestations of the Light in the world around them and in them (a conscience and need for pure love and forgiveness). From the beginning, He was on His way to be born into the world. He prepared His way in type lessons, prophecy, and judgment.

Verses 10,11. The world's reaction shows its inability to recognize or accept Him as either the Creator or the Preserver or Redeemer.

He came to His own home, and His own people received Him not. The nation of Israel had been called out to be a holy people, God's people.

They had the Law, the prophecies, the promises of the Coming Messiah. It was the announcement of the Baptist that the promised Messiah came as Jesus. The leaders of the people refused to accept Him.

Verse 12. But those who believed Him from among the Jews did so individually. Those among the Gentiles who believed were accounted equal - individuals forming the Church - who Christ gave the right to become children of God.

Once we are born again, we are brought into a close relationship with God - this gift must be developed by use - to grow by continuous exertion of faith in Christ, the Son of God.

Verse 13. The new life to which the believer has a "right to" comes only from God. It is not brought about by descent, by a man's desire, or by human power.

Verse 14. This states the progression: verse 1 - the beginning - creation, now the Incarnation - And the Word became flesh. The eternal entered time, the divine became human.

The use of the word tabernacle points to a temporary dwelling - and also points back to the Old Testament Tabernacle where the Lord visited His people. The one foreshadowed the other.

Then John becomes eyewitness and declares that he among others had seen evidence of Christ's divine nature - in word and deed and compassion, in death and resurrection.

The divine presence in the Old Testament tabernacle had been described as "glory", and so also the divine presence of The "Word Incarnate" among men showed "glory". This glory also shows forth as evidence of the relationship of Jesus to His Father. Jesus is the Only Son and He is the Son sent from the Father to fulfill a mission, "full of grace and truth"

Lesson III continued

Verse 15. The testimony of John the Baptist is introduced in the same way as before - as the last prophet of the coming Messiah. He also describes His true position in relation to Christ. Christ is the One that he had been proclaiming as coming. Now that He had come, John proclaims that Jesus is more important than he is - that Jesus was the eternal Son of God, before He was born among men. That is His pre-existence - as one with the Father in essence and being.

To think of Jesus as only a good man, or great teacher, and example to follow, completely misses the Truth about Him.

Paul puts it clearly in Philemon 2:5-8: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal to God, but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

Everything Jesus said and did originates in this fact, and flows from it.

Verse 16. Of His fulness have we all received, and grace for grace. All material and spiritual blessings come from God through Jesus. This suggests that all things good come from God, whether or not you recognize Him as its source or not.

But this statement goes much further. His fulness indicates Jesus as the Source, of the full measure of all divine power, and of love in Christ as the Incarnate Word. Each Christian, because of their relationship with Him may draw from that fulness what is needed for a productive life as part of Christ's body - the church. The use of the word "all" reaches beyond just those who were eyewitnesses, to everyone who has accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior. The first grace we receive only begins the blessings, understanding, gifts, and ministry that each Christian will receive, one after another, all adding together "grace" for 'grace'. All for our growth and maturity - of becoming more like Jesus in our journey through this life.

Verse 17. The law was given for the special purpose of teaching and training God's chosen people, to prepare the way for His promised Messiah. The Gospel is the fulfilling - the working out in history of the divine plan of redemption, the only way to reconcile man to God. Jesus brought the showing forth of God's deep love: so the acts of giving God's grace, and truth reveals God's plan clearly and leaves no doubts about it.

The law still has a purpose - it shows the sinful nature of all men. But it only pointed to the fulness of the redemption to come in the sacrifice of Jesus - the true and complete grace of God.

Verse 18. Because of our human nature, it is only possible to comprehend a limited amount of divine and spiritual realities. We

Lesson III continued

cannot see God or know the extent of the spiritual realm. But so far as it is possible, we may know Him as revealed in Christ. He who is the Word of God, has continual and complete fellowship with God; He came to this world as the only begotten Son - unique in relationship - the very closest possible - from the beginning and continuing beyond eternity.

The knowledge of God, which Christ had as God, He revealed to men as a man. The primary message Jesus revealed of God was as the Father. The relation of the Word to God is like that of the Son to the Father from everlasting to everlasting.

This Jesus declared, once and forever. This completes the prologue of John's Gospel. Now begins Christ revealing Himself to the World: Part One - The Proclamation (1:19-4:54), Part Two - The Conflict (5:1-12:50).



Lesson IV

John 1:19-34. John the Baptist - background.

"19 ¶ And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?

20 And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ.

21 And they asked him, What then? Art thou Eli'jah? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that Prophet? And he answered, No.

22 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?

23 He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Isaiah.

24 ¶ And they which were sent were of the Pharisees.

25 And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Eli'jah, neither that Prophet?

26 John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not;

27 he it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoelatchet I am not worthy to unloose.

28 These things were done in Bethab'ara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

29 ¶ The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!

30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me; for he was before me.

31 And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.

32 And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.

33 And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

34 And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God."

Since the Gospel of John focuses on the Baptist's witness after Jesus was baptized - a brief overview of His ministry will be helpful.

We recall his parentage and upbringing from righteous parents - his mother descended from one of the daughters of Aaron - her name - Elizabeth. His father Zacharias was a priest of the course of Abijah.

He was prophesied as one great in the sight of the Lord - who would be filled from his mother's womb with the Holy Spirit. He would abstain from strong drink; he rejected all the pleasures of goods and riches - one in rough clothes, eating honey and locusts in the wilderness of southern Judea.

His message was simple - he was the herald of the coming Messiah. He was preparing the way for Him. He called upon Israel

Lesson IV continued

to repent - that the Messiah would bring judgment on the nation only those who turned to God would be spared - only destruction would the ungodly receive.

The axe is at the root of the trees; those that do not bring forth good fruit will be cut down and burned.

The leaders expected the coming Messiah to deliver the nation from Roman oppression and set up His victorious kingdom.

The leaders in Israel remained confident in their heritage from Abraham and the merits they believed they earned by following the Law.

Nevertheless they were first curious, later seriously concerned, with this one crying in the wilderness, drawing more and more people and so many calling him a prophet from God.

The rite of Baptism was a continuation of the many washings and cleansings proscribed in the Old Testament - ceremonial purification.

John's baptism went further in preparing the way for a completely new condition - which would be fulfilled by the Baptism of Jesus.

John 1:19 - 4:54. The Proclamation.

The message of the Gospel was to be revealed to the world not only in word but also by deeds. This was to be offered to all those of the house of Israel. He is met with misunderstanding - not yet hostility. The Proclamation begins with the Testimony to Jesus by John (1:19-34).

The witness of the prophet - how Jesus is related to the preparatory dispensation, the revelation by direct divine communication.

Next the witness of the disciples, Jesus relative to individuals - and through spiritual insight (1:35-51). The third is the witness of deeds - the relation of Christ to nature (2:1-11) then closes with joyful confirmation of believers (2:11).

These incidents are recorded only by John and are those of an eyewitness.

John testifies of the coming Messiah. (Verses 19-28.) Then he recognizes Jesus as the Christ as He begins His public ministry (29-34). By this time, Jesus had already been baptized, therefore John already knew Jesus as the Christ - all this happened before the mission from Jerusalem.

They had come from the priests, and Pharisees to find out who John claimed to be.

John begins by readily telling them that he is not the promised Messiah. Then they ask if he is Elias who had been mentioned in Malachi 4:5.

Verse 21. As the forerunner of the Messiah. They apparently thought that Elija was to bodily return. He denied being Elias. When asked if he was "that prophet" meaning one like unto Moses which Moses predicted in Deuteronomy. He likewise said no.

Lesson IV continued

Verse 22. They repeated that they needed an answer to take back with them - "Who do you say you are?"

Verse 23. He answers by quoting Isaiah 40:3 - "one crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord." The Herald, or preparer of the way the Lord was to take in a spiritual sense.

Verses 24,25. By mentioning they were of the Pharisees, they show why they were so interested in this new rite - "baptism" - something startling and solemn. The symbolism of the rite represented a repentance from sin and a turning to God. Those in authority would naturally not like the implication that they needed to take such a step, thereby publicly admitting that they did anything that would require them to repent.

Ezekiel 36:25, Isaiah 52:15; Zechariah 13:1 connects this rite with the work of the Messiah.

Verse 26. John replies that he baptizes with water - explaining that his baptism is not the same as the one of the Messiah, but it points to and prepares the people to recognize the Christ who is already among them. Whom John had recognized but they had not.

Verse 27. Christ, although coming after him, will nevertheless be preferred more than John. John describes his own worth compares to Christ as less than a servant, whose job it was to take off his master's shoes or sandals. These answers would certainly not be helpful to those who could only repeat what John said to those who sent them.

Verse 28. The name Bethabara meaning "house of the passage" - the site of a ferry or ford across the Jordan. This also indicates that John had left the wilderness of Judea, and retired beyond Jordan (Matt. 3:1), where he continued to baptize.

In the following verses (29-34) Jesus is revealed as the One who fulfilled all of John's preparatory ministry.

Verse 29. The following day, Jesus is seen coming to John - here John openly states that Jesus is the promised Savior by calling Him, "The Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." (Coming from Isaiah 53:7.)

The lamb had always been the meek and innocent victim of sacrifices unto God - this especially seen in the Passover Lamb - the act which had delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage. Later Jesus identified Himself as the true Paschal Lamb at the Last Supper.

Also emphasized is that this Lamb was provided by God, not man.

Using the present tense emphasizes that this work begins here but continues and the end result is certain. The use of the word "sin" singular relates to the common nature of fallen man that 20

#### Lesson IV continued

Christ's life and death is powerful enough to atone for and remove the punishment of all sin.

Verse 30. John pronounces Jesus as the One whom he was the prophetic messenger for, who would be preferred more than he, and that Jesus was coming from the beginning of time.

Verse 31. John did not know Jesus until he had begun his baptizing ministry. As part of his calling, he recognized his purpose as forerunner and witness to the coming Messiah. This, to the nation of Israel, was a special and spiritual privilege of God's chosen people. These were the reasons for his ministry of repentance and baptism with water.

Verse 32. John bare witness of what he saw - he gazed intently as the Spirit came down from heaven in the form of a dove that stayed upon Jesus.

Before this, Jesus had lived a perfect and righteous life. Now, at the beginning of His public ministry, the Spirit visibly descends upon the Word made Flesh, to reveal God the Father to men.

The dove, a symbol of tenderness, of innocence, of gentle and tranquil movement

In the Old Testament, the Spirit visited the prophets but only from time to time. With Jesus it remained.

Verse 33. Though John had not known Jesus as the Christ - yet he had been told that one would come to his water baptism - and that he, John, would see the Spirit thus descend, and remain upon Him who God had sent, and who would subsequently baptize with the Holy Spirit.

Jesus became the giver of the Spirit who revealed Him, even as the Spirit enabled Him to reveal the Father. All this consecrated Him - set Him apart for this work of redemption.

Verse 34. The Baptist emphasizes that he has seen the things that confirmed his true mission as the forerunner and gave his prophetic witness to The One God had sent as His only begotten Son, the Messiah.

The other Gospels describe Christ's receiving of the Spirit as also a sign to Jesus, Himself, including the words addressed to Jesus from the Father, "Thou art my beloved Son" (in Mark and Luke).

This also was the conclusion of the Baptist's ministry. He had prepared the way, he had seen the signs promised and recognized Jesus as the Christ, Who was now to begin His public ministry.

Next, 1:35-51. John points out Jesus to two of his own disciples, who then follow Jesus. The rest of the chapter records the testimony of the disciples as they began to know Him.

Lesson V

John 1:35-51. Testimony of Disciples.

"35 ¶ Again the next day after, John stood, and two of his disciples;

36 and looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!

37 And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

38 Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou?

39 He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour.

40 One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

41 He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. 1

42 And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.

43 ¶ The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.

44 Now Philip was of Bethsai'da, the city of Andrew and Peter.

45 Philip findeth Nathan'a-el, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

46 And Nathan'a-el said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.

47 Jesus saw Nathan'a-el coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!

48 Nathan'a-el saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.

49 Nathan'a-el answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.

50 Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.

51 And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending Gen. 28.12 upon the Son of man."

On the previous day, the Baptist testified that Jesus was the Christ, The Lamb of God and the Son of God.

Verse 35. On this day, the Baptist was standing with two disciples when he saw Jesus walking nearby. Again the Baptist points out Jesus as the Lamb of God.

The Baptist knew his mission was about to end. The One who he

Lesson V continued

was to prepare the Way for had now come. Here he in effect was telling his followers that they should now follow the one greater than he, the Promised Messiah. The disciples left their teacher because he directed them to Jesus as the Lamb of God. If they had not been inwardly and spiritually prepared - that statement would not have affected them so directly and dramatically as to cause them to leave the Baptist.

The singular act of following Jesus at that moment meant that their choice was made, once and for all without hesitation or thought of turning back.

Verse 38. As Jesus was walking away, He became aware that the two were following Him. He turned and looked at them and asked "What seek ye?" He does not ask who they seek, but what they are seeking. They reply, "Rabbi, where are you staying?" They began by calling Him Master Teacher - to ask where He was staying meant they wanted to spend a lot of time with Him.

Verse 39. Jesus invites them to come and see. Their response was immediate - they went with Him and spent almost the whole day with Him, starting at about 10:00 A.M. This was the beginning of Christ's ministry, the first two disciples, the first two members of the Christian Church. The fact that the hour is mentioned is one of the incidental details that John records as he thought back to the date of his own spiritual birth. He was one of those first two disciples.

Verse 40. In this verse, John tells us that the other disciple was Andrew (who was the brother of Simon).

Verse 41. After spending the day with Jesus, they felt the immediate need to share their new-found faith in Jesus, the Christ of God. Andrew went to find his own brother. John went to find his brother as well, who was named James. Apparently, this all happened on the same day. The use of the word 'findeth' implies that the person is needed and the message delivered. The waiting is over and the Messiah has come; we must be with Him.

Verse 42. Simon is brought to Jesus, who recognizes him as Simon the son of John. Jesus tells him that he will earn the name Cephas (fulfilled and recorded in Matthew 16:18). The Aramaic name in Latin is Peter, meaning "a stone". A prophetic remark on the role that Peter was to play as the strongest voice of the Apostles in the founding of the Christian Church.

The following verses recount the events of the second day of Christ's ministry. Here, Jesus shows His first followers His deep insight and His divine authority.

Verse 43. Jesus returns to Galilee to find Philip. He calls upon him to become His disciple.

Lesson V continued

Verse 44. Since both Andrew and Peter were of the city of Bethsaida of Galilee, it is most likely that Philip was another follower of the Baptist, and that he was already acquainted with other disciples of the Baptist. When Jesus asks him to follow Him, Philip is prepared to do so.

Verse 45. Philip in his turn considered this event so important that he went to find Nathanael, who also sought the Messiah. He was from Cana in Galilee. First known as Nathaniel, and Theodore, he was later identified as Bartholomew. In the list of Apostles, Bartholomew is always mentioned with Philip by Matthew (10:3), Luke (6:14), and Mark (3:13).

Philip tells Nathanael that they (meaning the other followers of the Baptist) had now become disciples of Jesus, the one promised in the Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah. This included those given by Moses and the other prophets. Philip relates that Jesus was from Nazareth and His father was Joseph.

Verse 46. Nathanael cannot readily accept that anything good can come from that small, poor village, also not known for its holiness.

Philip replies, "Come and see," the only way to settle this question was for him to meet Jesus. Nathanael is willing to do so.

Verse 47. As they come into Jesus' sight, He remarks to those standing by Him that Nathanael was a true Israelite - one whose life honored God, being straightforward, without trying to fool anyone, with no ulterior motive or secret schemes; The way all of God's people should be.

Verse 48. Nathanael must have heard the Savior's words. He seems surprised that someone he had never met knew the truth about his inner thoughts and convictions. He asks Jesus, "How do you know me?"

Jesus replies that He had seen him under the fig tree before Philip found him. He had probably withdrawn there for serious thought or prayer.

Verse 49. Nathanael's reaction to this revelation was immediate and dramatic. All doubt, all previous assumptions, were gone. He replies first, Rabbi, then the Promised Messiah, and the Son of God, and finally the King. Nathanael certainly knew the various aspects of Jesus' role in history. He is the Great Teacher, He is the Son of God with all power and authority over the universe He called into being, and that His final earthly role was to be King over the whole earth at His Second Coming.

Verse 50. To Jesus it was a small thing to perceive Nathanael under a fig tree - so He seems humored by Nathanael's immediate and heartfelt leap of faith and recognition of Jesus as the Christ of God. Jesus tells him that this is only the beginning of what he

Lesson V continued

shall see and hear, that much greater evidence of His divine power and authority would much more strongly convince him of the truth of what he (Nathanael) had already said.

Verse 51. This was to be seen and witnessed to by all those who were touched by Jesus' ministry.

By introducing his next statement with "verily, verily" (used only by Jesus), He is emphasizing the important truth He is about to say - one of the meanings of Amen.

Heaven is to be open - meaning God would be communicating with man.

Jesus mentions first that angels would be ascending, then descending - angels were already on earth, thereby ascending to heaven. This reminds us of the vision of Jacob. This is the only reference to angels in John's Gospel.

Jesus refers to Himself as the Son of Man. He has already been called by others 'the Lamb of God', the Son of God, The Messiah, the King of Israel. He chooses to call Himself the Son of Man as the new relationship He has taken upon Himself in His Incarnation. He is truly man, and only in this way could He earn the right to redeem all of fallen humanity. By living through all of the temptations and infirmities, but without sin, he would be the perfect, without spot or blemish, Lamb of God, Who would be the innocent sacrifice to die the death we all deserve, and offer us the gift of eternal life.

Jesus uses the term 'Son of Man' throughout His ministry. It is recorded 30 times in Matthew, 13 in Mark, 25 in Luke, and 12 in John.

In the first two days of Jesus' ministry, He has gathered together His first six disciples: Andrew and Peter, James and John, Philip and Nathanael (later known as Bartholomew). An awesome beginning - but only the beginning.



Lesson VI

John 2:1-12. The Marriage at Cana.

"1 And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there:

2 and both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage.

3 And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine.

4 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.

5 His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.

6 And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece.

7 Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim.

8 And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it.

9 When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was, (but the servants which drew the water knew,) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom,

10 and saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now.

11 This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

12 ¶ After this he went down to Caper'na-um, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples; and they continued there not many days."

Verses 1,2. This continues the narrative of the beginning of Jesus' ministry - the third day He and His disciples who had arrived in Galilee the day before were asked to come to the marriage at Cana by His mother, Mary. She seems to have had a close relationship with the family and was already there when Jesus was summoned. Only John mentions this town, thought to have been about 4 1/2 miles north-west of Nazareth. John never writes 'Mary' in his narrative, but calls her 'the mother of Jesus'. Since Joseph is not mentioned here or at any other point, it has been reasonably assumed that he has already died by this time.

Verses 3,4. When the wine ran out (many times these celebrations went on up to seven days). Mary seems to have taken it upon herself to remedy the situation by calling upon Jesus. The way she simply states the fact implies that she expects Jesus to help. This shows that she trusted Jesus, and knowing Him so intimately as to continue to trust Him even after His good-natured rebuff. This is not a severe reproof, but a question. Now that Jesus has begun His work, His mother should not think to interfere. The rest of His life is laid out, held within, and all

Lesson VI continued

will come to pass at the proper times.

Verse 5. Mary tells the servants to do whatever Jesus asks of them. Her trust and faith in Jesus is unshaken.

Verses 6-8. The recoding of the miracle is simple and straight-forward - draw the water into the pots, then wine is found.

In the courtyard of the house, there were six stone waterpots that held something over nine gallons each. They were used for the ceremonial washing of the hands before and after meals. This many were needed for such a large gathering.

Jesus tells the servants to fill them up with water, which they did up to the brim. This made it obvious to all that they were full of water.

Jesus then tells them to draw some out, possibly with a cup or drinking vessel, and take it to the one in charge, the governor of the feast. This they did.

Verse 9. When the governor of the feast tasted the water - now wine - he called for the bridegroom. The servants knew that they had filled the pots with water. The governor knew that he tasted wine.

Verse 10. The governor testifies to the excellence of this new wine by speaking a common proverb: those who give a feast start with a good wine, then when the guests have 'well drunk', a cheaper, poorer quality wine is served. This obviously assumes that after a certain amount of drinking, the senses are dulled and the substitution would not be noticed. Thus the bridegroom is complimented for not following the tricky tradition.

Verse 11. This was the first miracle, therefore the beginning of miracles that Jesus would perform - showing His divine power and compassion. His miracles were always for someone's benefit - not just a flashy show. The wine at the wedding was for the benefit of all those at the feast - a gift to the bridegroom, and a work that increased His disciples' belief in who He was.

Only John records this miracle where Mary is a central character. It seems obvious that some of the details were told to John by Mary.

The simplicity of this miracle revealed the true character of Jesus - it showed His glory - without the selfish aim of showing off for personal gain or influence.

Verse 12. A transition. Jesus was still involved with His family as they (his mother and brothers) plus His disciples went down from Cana to Capernaum on the Sea of Galilee. This was not yet the more permanent residence of Jesus during His ministry in Galilee.

Concerning his brethren, it seems both natural and obvious

Lesson VI continued

that Mary and Joseph would have children at some time after Jesus' birth. Four brothers are mentioned in Matthew 13:55 - James, Joses, Simion, and Judas. Verse 56 mentions sisters, meaning at least 2. It has been suggested that the sisters would have been married by this time, and settled in Nazareth. Their names are not recorded.

Verses 13-18. This begins Christ's public ministry: fittingly in Jerusalem at the temple during Passover. The fact that John calls it the Jewish Passover was to separate it from what was to be called the Christian Passover, by the time John wrote his Gospel.

"13 ¶ And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem,

14 and found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting:

15 and when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables;

16 and said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house a house of merchandise.

17 And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.

18 Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign showest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?"

Verse 14. Once in Jerusalem, Jesus goes to His Father's House, the Temple. Here in the outer court, the court of the Gentiles, there was a market belonging to the house of Annas. Certainly Jesus had seen these abuses of the holy place. These people were regularly engaged in this business. Not only selling animals for the sacrifices, but also those who changed coins for a fee, for only Jewish coins could be offered in the Temple. The Jews had desecrated this court - a part of the Temple set apart for worship by non-Jews. This was done to make it easy and profitable for Jews to follow the ceremonies of their religion.

Verse 15. Jesus picks up some of the loose pieces of rope used to lead the larger animals, and braided them together. This made a short whip which He used to enforce His authority to run them all out - the people and the animals - He turned over the money-changers' tables, scattering coins all over the floor.

Verse 16. He then tells those that sold doves to leave. That Jesus calls the Temple His Father's House and not "our" father's is significant - this relationship was the source of His authority and included His claim to be the Messiah. These people, on the other hand, had made the Temple, for their own use, a house of merchandise - worldly business, not a place of worship.

Lesson VI continued

Verse 17. This first public act of Jesus had two effects: on His disciples, and on the unbelieving onlookers.

The disciples recalled the scripture of Psalm 69:9, which says, 'the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.' The verse continues, 'and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.' As a true prophet of God, Jesus had stood for the holy righteousness of God. The Jews used His action as an occasion of reproach.

The word 'zeal' describes the energy and fearlessness of the present action which comes from deep within.

Verse 18. The response of the Jews present is to ask for a sign. If Jesus has the authority to drive out all the merchants, they want proof, as if they asked for some show, a miracle, to convince them.

What they couldn't perceive was that to ask for a further sign, when He who all signs had pointed to from the beginning, was in fact standing before them.

Verse 19. The reply of Jesus totally dumbfounded them. He will destroy this temple (meaning Himself) and be raised in three days.

Historically, the temple had been the center of God's presence among His people. Jesus had come to fulfill the promise of the Temple as the 'Emmanuel' ('God with Us'). With His resurrection, He became the eternal presence of God with men - as Head of His Church, which is Christ's body.

That Jesus was rejected and put to death brought with it the necessity of the destruction of the Temple. This was first seen spiritually when the veil between the Holy Place, and the Holy of Holies was rent in two, then later the building was completely destroyed.

The new worship is in Christ. The new life of God's people is in Christ.

Verse 20. The Jews are astonished, thinking that Jesus meant to tear the temple down and then build it back up in three days. They remark that its construction had already taken 46 years. It was not yet complete. It would not be officially finished until 64 A.D., 6 years before it would be destroyed by the Roman Army.

Verse 21. John informs us of the true meaning of Christ's words. The temple was His body. When Jesus was raised by God from the dead, the disciples remembered this occasion when Jesus had foretold His death and resurrection. They trusted the word of Scripture as absolutely true. Most likely, the reference is to Psalm 16:10, though John doesn't record it here. The disciples believed the Scripture, the written Word of God, and they believed what Jesus said - the Living Word of God.

Lesson VI continued

Verse 23. The place - Jerusalem; the time - Passover; the circumstance - the feast.

The place - the City of God's Choice; the time - when the birth of the nation was celebrated; the circumstance - the joy of the feasting.

The people are described as believing in His Name. They believed He was the Messiah that they looked for, rather than a deep trust in Jesus Himself. Many saw Him do signs and miracles, which caught their attention. Some believed one sign, some another. Just as many in a crowd will look at anything unusual as to catch their attention.

Verse 24. Jesus knew the true character of those people - this extended to His knowledge of the hearts of all people.

Verse 25. No one had anything to tell Him about what was in man. This He knew by His own powers of discernment, recognition, intuition, and conviction. Though the thoughts and feelings of men remained unexpressed - Jesus knew immediately, universally, and completely what they were..

In His understanding the nature of the world, Jesus exhibited all the human powers that are common to man - but His understanding was not limited, but was perfect.

John describes this knowledge as acquired and absolute.

All this was in addition to Jesus' divine knowledge, His perfect spiritual sympathy.

Added together, we get a compilation of attributes that begin to raise in our minds the Perfect Humanity, and the Perfect Divinity of our Savior. Only a beginning - This is the Jesus that we believe in, that we trust in.

Lesson VII

John 3:1-13.

"1 There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicode'mus, a ruler of the Jews:

2 the same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

4 Nicode'mus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

9 Nicode'mus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?

10 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?

11 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

12 If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?

13 And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven."

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These passages reveal the kingdom of God set up by Jesus - compared to the old dispensation. Nicodemus comes as an educated and truth-seeking Jew looking for the national hope of the coming Messiah - a continuation of the expected promises of the Old Testament.

Jesus checks this interpretation by telling him that the Kingdom of God is not something to outwardly watch for. The new spiritual birth is the result of a new power unto a new order. It is not the work of man, nor a result of man's desire or possession.

Nicodemus was a learned and thoughtful leader, who was looking for the national hope of the promised conquering Messiah. Jesus corrects this anticipation. The Kingdom of God He proclaims is not outwardly seen - but is only apprehended after the new birth from above.

Verse 1. This man was a strict follower of Jewish laws and

Lesson VII continued

traditions, a member of the Sanhedrin.

Verse 2. He came to Jesus by night - not wanting to be openly identified with Jesus. He was to later join Joseph of Arimathea when he had obtained the Body of Jesus from Pilate.

Nicodemus addresses Jesus as Rabbi, or Master, and acknowledges that he and others recognized that, though Jesus had not come up through the Rabbinic schools, yet from His works it was obvious that God was with Him - that He was a teacher sent by God. Nicodemus apparently wanted to know more of Jesus' teaching, especially the Kingdom of God of which the Baptist had begun preaching.

Verse 3. Jesus' reply was to the true need of the one who asks. Though Nicodemus seems to limit his desire to know more of what he already thought he and others understood.

In reply, Jesus distinctly tells him that His mission was not a continuation of what went before. The Kingdom of God He was founding was a new creation - to be entered by being born again.

Only in this verse, and verse 5, does John use the phrase 'the Kingdom of God', though it is commonly used in the other Gospels; Matthew alone uses the similar phrase 'the Kingdom of Heaven'.

It was always considered in a two-fold use - the outward Kingdom of God in the Old Dispensation was the Nation of Israel - the true believers were the spiritual members of that Kingdom.

In the New Testament, the outward Kingdom becomes the Church - the true believers, the spiritual members, described as the Body of Christ, He being the Head.

Verse 4. Nicodemus then asks the question, applying the words to his personal situation - As an old man, how can the total accumulation of all he has done and experienced and learned be done away with, and started over, while he remains the same person.

Nicodemus takes the physical part - can a physical birth be repeated. If this is not possible, then could it be possible in the moral or ethical sense. What he could not understand was the mystery of the forgiveness of sin, which brings spiritual regeneration.

Verse 5. In reply, Jesus emphatically enlarges upon What he had said before. He now reveals the nature of the new birth - an outward and an inward aspect.

Water symbolizes purification.

Spirit brings quickening.

This points back to the Baptist's rite - the outward sign of repentance and so of forgiveness. The spirit marked the inward power which the Baptist pointed to Jesus as the One who would bring that baptism. The new life would result from the direct action of the Holy Spirit through Christ.

Lesson VII continued

This has a prophetic aspect as what would be common Christian baptism, the outward act of faith, as incorporation into the body of Christ. The birth of the Spirit is inseparable from the baptism. By this new baptism one becomes a citizen of the kingdom, which has an outward aspect and a spiritual one.

Verse 6. Jesus here intimates that even if it were possible for a man to be born again from his mother's womb - he still would be the same flesh - a sinner.

The kingdom of God is spiritual - whoever is born of the Spirit will resemble the Spirit.

Verse 7. Jesus tells Nicodemus to not be surprised - that a man cannot by knowledge or understanding of Scripture or Rabbinic traditions, grasp the true nature of the Messiah. Nor could he prepare himself to either see or enter into it.

Verse 8. Both the wind and the spirit operate according to invisible forces. Their presence is observed in their effects.

The believer shows by word and deed that an invisible force has changed him. Just as branches and leaves register the moving of the wind on them.

Verse 9. Nicodemus cannot grasp how this can happen.

Verse 10. Jesus recognizes Nicodemus as a teacher of the chosen people - but he doesn't understand what Jesus has just told him.

Verse 11. Again emphatically, Jesus replies, but He here speaks in the plural "we", as including those who were at that time His close followers, who may have been present. Those already gathered around Jesus had had personal experience of the spiritual power and miraculous works that Jesus here speaks of. These things have not been believed by Nicodemus (and those of the Pharisees).

Verse 12. Jesus has told him of things of the earth that have been seen and heard, and he has not believed - how will he be able to believe if Jesus tells him about heavenly things? Jesus returns to the singular "if I tell you," "how shall" pointing the future that the things of heaven are being brought to earth as the developing revelation of the Son of God and His redemptive work among men. This is bringing about the reuniting of man with God.

The next 3 verses explain the reality of these truths.

Verse 13. Jesus alone could teach men about heavenly things; He alone had come down from heaven, and this mission on earth was temporary; once it was completed, He would return to heaven.

By having been at home in heaven, Jesus has the fulness of knowledge of heaven. Even as the Son of Man, He has retained all



Lesson VII continued

that He was as the Son of God. And yet, even on earth, He is constantly and completely in awareness and communion with the Father. He was abiding in heaven, even as we are called upon to abide in Christ. A relationship of awareness and communion of an indestructible bond of the trust of love.

Lesson VIII

John 3:14-21. Eternal Life.

"14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

15 that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

16 ¶ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

21 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."

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Verses 14,15. Jesus refers back to an event when Moses placed the symbol of a serpent on a pole which, when looked upon, brought healing from the deadly serpents' bites then killing the Israelites because of their sin. This eventually became the symbol used to represent medicine and healthcare. The serpent represented what Christ would be considered when He also was lifted up upon a pole - a worm, and no man, a person rejected and considered an evil doer, a criminal, but at the same time, the One who would bring healing to those who looked upon Him with faith. But those who looked upon the brazen serpent, were only restored to earthly life, while those who accept the crucified Jesus receive eternal life in Him. This is also describing a spiritual event that takes place within each believer. Each one then possesses eternal life through Christ.

This ends John's record of the conversation with Nicodemus. The result of this conversation can be measured by the later mentions of Nicodemus.

Verse 16. This most familiar and often quoted verse is a summary and a clear explanation of the previous words of Jesus. It clearly states the goal of Christ's mission - how, why, what, who, and the outcome.

The love of God, as seen in His giving His Son for man's need, is the source of man's Redemption. God gave the Son even as the Son gave Himself.

God's love is without limit, but man must do his part in believing. The result is described negatively (those who don't believe will be judged, and perish) and then positively (those who

Lesson VIII continued

do believe have eternal life, being saved).

Verse 17. This verse takes us from the previous thoughts of sacrifice and love, to the mission and the authority behind it.

The word "world" is used three times. This emphasizes the sad realities of life without God. There is no limit to God's offer of Salvation - to all of humanity. The gift of Jesus was without limit and His life and death paid the price of every human being's sin - therefore He is the Savior of the world.

Verses 18,19. The object of Christ's mission is not judgment, yet it is the essential result. Not to choose Christ is to choose judgment. The believer escapes judgment; his new life is in Jesus. The unbeliever calls upon himself the completion of judgment.

Jesus is here again called 'only begotten', emphasizing the close relation to the Father and the love it includes. To not believe in Jesus as the Only Son of God, as He is revealed to be, emphatically shows the reason for the resulting situation of judgment.

Verse 19. This verse clearly shows the reason for condemnation: the outworking of God's absolute law. Men loved darkness rather than the light. Men had a clear and obvious choice, no shades of meaning or ambiguity. Men chose the deeds and the consequences at the same time.

Because their habits were evil and in darkness when the choice was offered, their choice was the darkness. Their darkness was the total opposite of the light. Their decision was final, their works were evil.

Verses 20,21. When the Light of Christ came, all with an affinity or desire for light were drawn to the light. All that is uncomfortable or alien to the light seeks to get away and hide from the light. Because men's works were evil, they sought to keep them hidden, unseen, unnoticed, fearing persecution or reproof, condemnation, or judgment. The word 'evil' suggests that which is mean, lowdown, worthless, harmful. Evil actions have a weight of consequence, while works of righteousness have a real and permanent existence as being part of eternal Truth.

He who hates the light flees from it, and fears the effects of it. He fears being reproved, meaning sifted, tried, or tested, and then convicted by one having authority to justly judge and condemn.

Verse 21. Here a contrast is drawn between many separate bad works, and the opposite right deeds which come together in a unity of the Truth. Right deeds are those that make Truth visible. True thought leads to true action. Man is not described as loving the light, but striving towards the light. Even though Christians' actions are imperfect, their value is in the outworking of their relationship with God. God in this case looks upon the motive and

Lesson VIII continued

desire of their hearts - not for praise, or testing. In God is the source of the power of the righteous, not in their own strength or competence. Thus works done 'in God' do abide and maintain their value.

John 3:14-21 + 22-30. Teaching in Judea.

"22 ¶ After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized.

23 And John also was baptizing in Ae'non near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized.

24 For John was not yet cast into prison.

25 ¶ Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying.

26 And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him.

27 John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.

28 Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him.

29 He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.

30 He must increase, but I must decrease."

Though His work in Jerusalem was not understood and was also misinterpreted, He had shown Himself with a significant Messianic sign in the clearing of the merchants from the Temple. So here Jesus again travels in Judea as a prophet, in part following the method of the Baptist. By act and word, He prepares a group of followers to recognize who He is and increase their faith in Him, and acquire the true understanding of the Messiah's nature and mission.

In verses 22-24 is a summary of their work. Then John's testimony in 25-30, which is further expounded in verses 31-36.

This is unique to John's Gospel - showing his close companionship with the Lord.

Verses 22-24. For a short time, Jesus and the Baptist were both preaching repentance, and baptizing in the same area of Judea. Afterwards Jesus goes into Galilee.

Jesus had been preaching in the Temple - where He received no welcome. He spoke in Jerusalem, afterwards in Judea, then in Galilee, which became the center of His ministry. He, along with His disciples, remained in Judea for some time. They engaged in baptizing like John - both continuing this rite as a preparation for the Kingdom of God.

Having been rejected in Jerusalem, Jesus began anew in a new

Lesson VIII continued

field and mode.

Verse 23. The Baptist continued to fulfill his appointed work, even though he had acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah, the Lamb of God.

The area called Enon was well-known to have many springs, streams, or pools of water. Many continued to come to the Baptist to be baptized.

Verse 24. Jesus' public ministry in Galilee did not begin until John was put in prison (Matthew 4:12,13,17).

Verses 25-30. Because Jesus and the Baptist were doing similar work, questions arose which caused the Baptist to give his last testimony to Christ. Some seem to have considered them rivals.

We may consider that in His baptizing, Jesus taught them about the new birth, which baptizing typified, as He had explained to Nicodemus.

Verse 26. Apparently, some of the Baptist's followers were upset that one who he had baptized beyond Jordan that John had borne witness to, was now baptizing and that many go to Him. An expression of anger and frustration, is voiced by the Baptist's disciples.

Verse 27. John replies - all ministries are from God - as John's work was, so also was that of Jesus. John has never considered Jesus a rival, but the One he was sent to prepare the way for.

Verse 28. You need no further teaching - the Baptist emphatically says that his ministry was only temporary, a preparation for another, even the Christ.

Verse 29. John explains with the figure of a marriage. The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands behind him, is greatly pleased to be in the bridegroom's presence, to hear his voice. His joy is now complete, because Jesus has come and so far surpassed the work of all those who prepared for His coming. As the Baptist sees that Jesus had gathered around Him many disciples and was building the beginnings of His church, he knows his work has been successful and is now complete.

Verse 30. Here the Baptist states the divine law, which was also prophetic - his role would decrease. What he did not know is that it would include imprisonment, hardship, and finally death.

This section apparently describes the summation by the Apostle John of the relationship of the Baptist (the Forerunner) to the Son, and his relation to the prophets of the Old Testament

Lesson VIII continued

dispensation generally.

John 3:31-36.

"31 ¶ He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all.

32 And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony.

33 He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true.

34 For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.

35 The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.

36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

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Verses 31,32. These verses contrast the earthly and heavenly teacher - the only One who has come from above, therefore above all, teaches what He has seen and heard in the kingdom of truth. The one of the earth speaks of or in relation to the earth.

The one who comes from above all is sovereign over all of creation, and testifies what He has seen and heard.

The one of the earth has limits because of human nature and the source of his authority is earthly. The majority of people do not accept His Testimony.

Verse 33. Yet there were those who received the testimony and both accepted and kept it as a personal possession. Their experience of faith is based on Christ's absolute divine knowledge and power. The seal closes any argument and confirms that God is not only True, but The Truth. That they accept the words of Jesus means that they accept that the teachings are directly from God, and thereby they are brought into a relationship with the Father. Also in Christ is every promise of God completed and fulfilled.

Verse 34. The one heavenly messenger speaks the complete message of God to man. His power and seal are the fulness of the Spirit given to Him - described as 'without measure'.

Verse 35. The reason behind what has been said is in the actual relationship of The Messiah to God, as the Son to the Father. There is no limitation to what God has given.

Verse 36. The final result of the revelation of the Gospel as compared with all that went before is what comes out - either everlasting life, or condemnation. The faith is continuous, the possession of everlasting life is contained in Jesus, the Son of

Lesson VIII continued

God, and therefore certain.

Unbelief is the same as disobeying the will and call of God offered through the Gospel of Jesus. Unbelievers will neither conceive nor perceive any true conception of life and its purpose, much less gain true enjoyment from it. The righteous judgment and wrath of God are their rewards. The divine law is unchangeable. The consequence of sin is death. The only way to remove this consequence is faith in the sacrifice of Jesus the Christ of God.

End Chapter 3.

Lesson IX

John 4:1-42. The Samaritan Woman.

- "1 When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John,  
2 (though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)  
3 he left Judea, and departed again into Galilee.  
4 And he must needs go through Samaria.  
5 Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.  
6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour.  
7 ¶ There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.  
8 (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.)  
9 Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.  
10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.  
11 The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?  
12 Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?  
13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:  
14 but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.  
15 The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.  
16 ¶ Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.  
17 The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband:  
18 for thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.  
19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.  
20 Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.  
21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.  
22 Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship; for salvation is of the Jews.  
23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him."



Lesson IX continued

"24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

25 The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.

26 Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.

27 ¶ And upon this came his disciples, and marveled that he talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her?

28 The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men,

29 Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?

30 Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.

31 ¶ In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat.

32 But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of.

33 Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him aught to eat?

34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.

36 And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.

37 And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth.

38 I sent you to reap that whereupon ye bestowed no labor: other men labored, and ye are entered into their labors.

39 ¶ And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did.

40 So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days.

41 And many more believed because of his own word;

42 and said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world."

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Verses 1-3. Once Jesus becomes aware that the Pharisees were monitoring His activities, He decided to change locations. He obviously wanted to avoid a premature collision with that group. He then moved His area of work back into Galilee.

Verse 2. Corrects the misunderstanding - Jesus did not personally baptize, but His disciples did so. This sacrament was one that presupposes the death and resurrection of Christ - therefore was most proper that it was done by the followers of Jesus.

Lesson IX continued

Verse 3. Galilee was further from the closest scrutiny of the religious leaders found in Jerusalem and Judea.

Verse 4. The quickest and most direct route to Galilee from Jerusalem was through Samaria. This passing through brought about a revelation of the future extension of the Gospel.

Verses 5,6. Jesus comes to a small village known as Sychar. It was near the parcel of ground that Jacob had promised Joseph. When the Promised Land had finally been conquered, the bones of Joseph were taken there and buried as he had requested while still in Egypt. Still outside the 'city', they came to Jacob's well. Jesus was weary from the journey and sat upon the well alone while his disciples went ahead to the town to get some food (verse 8). It was about 6 in the evening.

Verse 7. It was then that a Samaritan woman came to the well to draw water. Jesus asked her to give Him a drink. Any Samaritan was despised by the Jews, but a woman also had very little stature to religious leaders. She was also of the lower classes, for by this time the drawing of water was the responsibility of servants. According to later recorded tradition, her name was Photina. Jesus, in requesting of her a favor of giving Him a drink, He offered her the privilege of giving to Him.

Verse 8. The disciples had gone to purchase eggs, fruit, and such from the Samaritans, which would not contract defilement. They were not present to draw water for Jesus.

Verse 9. The woman is startled by this request. That a Jew would speak to a Samaritan woman and ask something of her made her suspicious of some ulterior motive. Jews commonly had no dealings with Samaritans.

The hostility between the two peoples may be traced to the Assyrian colonization of that part of Israel (2 Kings 17:24). When the Jews returned during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, the Samaritans were against them, and this antagonism led to their building a rival temple on Mount Gerizim. Religious bitterness remained between the two peoples.

Verse 10. In reply, Jesus tells her that if she had any idea of what God was offering to all people, and that He was God's Chosen One, then she would be boldly asking Him for a gift far greater than what He had asked of her. The word 'gift' here is unique in the Gospels, used of the gift of the Spirit, and the gift of redemption in Christ. The living water is continually springing from an unfailing source. The thirst He felt suggested an image of the spiritual need she had and the blessing He was prepared to give her. The need of all people is fellowship with God, a spiritual thirst. The gift of the Holy Spirit in the Revelation of the Truth leads to that communion eternal which

Lesson IX continued

comes by knowledge and faith in God through His Son Jesus Christ.

Verse 11. The woman's reply shows that she cannot yet see the true understanding of what Jesus said. She remarks that the well is too deep, and He has nothing to draw out the water with. Here this tired thirsty man offers her more than she can give to Him. How is this possible? Where would He get this living water?

Verse 12. How can this poor weary traveler be more powerful than the patriarch Jacob, who dug the well, and he, his children, and his cattle drank thereof? The Samaritans claimed descent from Joseph's children Ephraim and Manasse.

Verses 13,14. Jesus, in reply, answers the question in the woman's mind, not her spoken words. She guessed that it was other water than that which Christ asked for. The well supplied the physical thirst for a short time. The Water that Jesus was waiting to give was living, and satisfied forever the need for spiritual refreshment.

The water provided by Jesus will become an eternal spring of water of eternal life. This life comes from the source of all life and rises up to Him again.

Verse 15. The woman perceives at the least the possibly great value of what Jesus offers and asks for the gift. That gift appeared to have two attributes - to satisfy her needs and to help her satisfy the needs of those she would minister to.

Verse 16. Jesus tells her to get her husband and bring him back with her. By this, Jesus offers His gift to the one she is responsible to minister to. It was also a test of her awakening faith.

Verse 17. She answered that she had no husband. Jesus replies that she spoke correctly, the actual truth.

Verse 18. Jesus states that she has had 5 husbands, and the one she now lives with, she is not married to. In this way, what she said was true.

Verse 19. The woman is convinced by this that her whole life was known by Jesus. That He must be a prophet in communication with God - for only in this way could He know such private things.

She then thinks He may be the One to answer the question of the proper place for men to worship God.

Verse 20. To a Samaritan, no other issue was more important than settling the argument between Jerusalem and Mt. Gerizim being the religious center for the proper worship of God.

Her ancestors worshipped at the Samaritan temple since the return. The well was located at the foot of this mountain.

Lesson IX continued

According to Samaritan tradition, this was where Abraham had offered up Isaac, and also where Abraham came in contact with the priest-king Melchisedek.

Verse 21. Jesus bypasses the choice between the two places of worship of God as Heavenly Father, who finds His house where His children are.

Verse 22. Jesus describes Samaritan worship as of people who do not know the true character of God, especially as recorded in the Hebrew scriptures. They may follow the Law, but the Jews possess the promises of salvation as gradually revealed to them throughout the ages by the prophets and the other Scriptures to be fulfilled in the Messiah.

Verse 23. The former differences were no longer the ultimate questions. Now that Christ was among men, He brought a fundamental change. The Old Testament Jewish religion was a following of the letter of the Law given by God to them through Moses. The religion of the Samaritans was based on an alternate system. Through Christ, men are enabled to have communion with the Father, a worship in the Spirit framed in their best perception of the truth, through the relationship between the Father and His Son. The spirit given to man by God is that part of man that can respond to the Spirit of God.

The true worshipper is the one God seeks to worship Him, who is The Truth.

Verse 24. God is Spirit, not limited by matter, space, and time. This describes God's nature, just as God is light, and God is love, also do so.

Verse 25. The woman's response shows that she accepted Jesus as a prophet but the things Jesus now explained could only be affirmed by the promised Messiah. The Messiah she conceived of would bring the blessing of true communication with God.

Verse 26. Apparently, she was ready to accept the Messiah, and therefore Jesus reveals to her that He is the Messiah.

Verse 27. At this juncture, the disciples return and characteristically are surprised at Jesus talking with this Samaritan woman. The fact that none of the disciples questioned Jesus shows their respect for His motives and that He would eventually in His own time inform them of His reasons for His conversation with her.

Verse 28. The woman's response to Jesus' telling her He was the Messiah, was her leaving her waterpot and returning to town, and telling men of that place what she had experienced. Jesus had put aside His desire for water, and she had put aside her own

Lesson IX continued

purpose of coming to the well. Her message was to anyone she met.

Verse 29. The effect of Christ's words on the conscience of the woman is seen in her statement that Jesus had told her enough to make her realize that He knows all of her secrets. With hope between the lines, she says, "Can this be the Christ?"

Verse 30. The men's response is immediate; they go to see this remarkable man.

Verse 31. Meanwhile, the disciples show their concern for their Master's welfare by urging Him to eat some of the food they have brought back from the town.

Verse 32. Jesus says that He has meat that they do not know about.

Verse 33. Rather than directly asking Jesus, they ask each other if someone else had brought Jesus something to eat.

Verse 34. Jesus reveals that to satisfy the needs of His soul, He must do the will of His Father who sent Him and to complete the true end of that mission.

Verse 35. He rhetorically asks if they don't perceive the condition of the crops that indicate about four months until harvest. Then He speaks of the spiritual harvest as already at the stage for reaping. The first-fruits of Samaria are spiritual, as Jesus saw the crowd coming from the town.

Verse 36. The work Jesus now had to do has an immediate reward, gathering fruit that shall not perish, but include life eternal. Whoever sowed the seed shall be glad of his labor. The forerunner shall share the joy of him who harvested. All those who went before Jesus, sowed for the Christ Who was now the Lord of the Harvest.

Verse 37. In this spiritual sowing and reaping, the familiar proverb finds its perfect fulfillment. In the fact that they are already reaping shows the proverb true.

Verse 38. The disciples' mission had already shown the truth in that they were already reaping what had already been sown by others.

Verse 39. The faith of the woman had found others who were ready to believe that Jesus was the Christ, at the testimony of the woman.

Verse 40. Their faith brought them to Jesus to hear more of His teaching. They asked Him to stay a while, and He gave them two

Lesson IX continued

days.

Verse 41. Far more came to believe in Him after hearing Him speak.

Verse 42. These new believers state that their belief is based on their own experience with Christ and not just what the woman had told them. They have heard for themselves. They had not required any sign or miracles. They then express the first acknowledgment that Jesus is the Savior of the world. The Gospel came through the Jews, but it was offered to everyone without respect to race, creed, gender, nation, position, society, or economic status. In other words - the offering of Salvation is to every sinner.

Lesson X

John 6:1-29.

"1 After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tibe'ri-as.

2 And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased.

3 And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples.

4 And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.

5 When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?

6 And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.

7 Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.

8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him,

9 There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?

10 And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.

11 And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would.

12 When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.

13 Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.

14 Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world.

15 ¶ When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.

16 ¶ And when even was now come, his disciples went down unto the sea,

17 and entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Caper'na-um. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them.

18 And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew.

19 So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid.

20 But he saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid.

21 Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.

22 ¶ The day following, when the people, which stood on the other side of the sea, saw that there was none other boat there, save that one whereinto his disciples were entered, and that Jesus went

Lesson X continued

not with his disciples into the boat, but that his disciples were gone away alone;

23 (howbeit there came other boats from Tibe'ri-as nigh unto the place where they did eat bread, after that the Lord had given thanks:)

24 when the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Caper'na-um, seeking for Jesus.

25 ¶ And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither?

26 Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.

27 Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

28 Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

29 Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."

This takes place after His ministry in Jerusalem where He healed the paralytic and taught those present of His relationship with the Father. In this chapter, John describes the relationship between Christ and men. This takes place in Galilee. It shows the contrast between the two ideas about the Messiah that were evidenced. On one hand, many people were ready to accept a material and local Messianic Kingdom, which was not what Jesus was offering. On the other hand, Jesus was offering a spiritual and eternal Kingdom.

There are three parts: the signs in verses 1-21, the teaching in verses 22-59; and the outcome in verses 60-71.

Verses 1-21 describe the signs of land and sea. First, the feeding of the 5,000, then Jesus walking on the water.

Verses 1-15. All four Gospels record this event. Jesus shows Himself as the supporter and sustainer of life, and the guide and strength of His followers.

Verse 1. At the time after their departure from Jerusalem, Jesus and His disciples journeyed to the east side of the sea of Galilee. According to the accounts of events immediately preceding this journey, one was the death of John the Baptist. Also, Herod sought to see Jesus (afraid He was another John to accuse Him), and the return of the disciples from their mission. Only Luke mentions the place, called Bethsaida of Galilee, also known as the home of Philip. This sea was also called the Sea of Tiberias.

Verse 2. A great crowd habitually followed Him, having seen and heard about Jesus' healings of various ailments. As these



Lesson X continued

signs pointed to Jesus, so they followed the signs until they caught up with Him.

Verse 3. Jesus went up into the mountain which was around the lake on the east side. There He was sitting with His disciples. Matthew 5:1 describes it as a desert spot.

Verse 4. The Passover was very near, the well-known feast of the Jews.

Verses 5,6. Jesus and His disciples had sailed across the lake, while the crowd had watched this and then walked around the northern edge of the lake. It was when they first were reaching the place where Jesus was that He looked up and saw the crowd approaching. It was then that Jesus first spoke to Philip. It appears that this took place before the day's teaching. Though Jesus knew what He was going to do, He asks how they could supply bread to this hungry crowd. The question provoked Philip to think. He had to provide for such a multitude. Jesus wanted Philip to realize that he could do nothing but that he should look to Jesus for all the needs of the people.

Verse 7. Philip replies that a certain sum of money would not be enough to buy bread that would provide even a little for everyone.

Verse 8. Andrew, Peter's brother, informs Jesus that a young boy had 5 barley loaves and 2 small fish, remarking that they were insignificant considering the extent of the crowd. Barley bread was commonly known as the bread of the poor.

Verse 10. Jesus directs His disciples to get the men to sit down on the grass - about 5,000 of them. Matthew 14:21 adds, "beside women and children." This apparently took place in early spring - being near the Passover.

Verse 11. Jesus took the loaves and blessed them, giving thanks to God, acknowledging that the Father's will was being accomplished. Jesus then began distributing the bread and afterwards the fish. This continued until all had had all they wanted.

Verse 12. Then Jesus directs the disciples to collect anything that was left over, that no food would be wasted.

Verse 13. They gathered twelve baskets of pieces of the barley bread that was left uneaten.

Verse 14. This miracle prompted the men to speculate that this was an indication that Jesus was the special prophet that was promised to the Jewish nation. Luke mentions (9:11) that Jesus

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spoke to the multitude concerning the kingdom of God. It has been suggested that because the Baptist had recently been put to death, some thought Jesus was about to lead an uprising to avenge the Baptist's murder.

Verse 15. Jesus perceives their desire to make Him their king, even against His own will. They have a particular role for Him to play, to fulfill their own desires, which were for worldly power to overthrow their oppressors. Jesus got away from them by going into the mountain nearby, by Himself. The parallel recordings of this event add the words 'to pray' (Mark 6:46). The main group of the crowd was sent away, but some hung around until morning.

Verse 16. Begins the scene upon the Lake. This was the second evening (from sunset until dark). The disciples went down the mountain to the seashore, and boarded a ship. They set sail for Capernaum. By this time, it was dark, and Jesus was not with them. It appears that Jesus had directed them to meet Him on the eastern shore at a place near Capernaum.

Verse 18. Clearly describes the effect of a sudden strong wind blowing upon the sea.

Verse 19. The sea was about 6 miles wide, and having rowed about half of that, the disciples were approximately in the middle of the lake, but closer to the northern shore. At this point, they see someone walking upon the water, coming toward them. Quite understandably, they were fearful of such an unnatural sight.

Verse 20. Jesus calls out to them, that it is He and that there was no reason to fear.

Verse 21. They gratefully welcomed Him on board. Luke 12:46 adds, "Fear passed into joy." Once on board the ship, the storm ceased and the ship was run upon the beach where they had been headed. Both results came from the presence of Christ when welcomed aboard the boat.

These two events show clearly that Jesus and His deeds were far and above any normal human, physical, material possibilities. The actions of men are also involved. They take Jesus aboard their boat, then they reach their destination.

Verses 22-29. Starting at verse 22, we come upon the discourses at Capernaum. In part, they show why the expectations of the crowd were mistaken. They also reveal the time and nature of Christ's Person and mission. This was a difficult trial of the faith of the disciples that were following Him.

Verse 22. The following day, there was still a group waiting to again see Jesus. They had watched the disciples leave on the

Lesson X continued

only boat there, but they had not seen Jesus with them. They naturally assumed that Jesus was still upon the mountain. They were expecting Him to come down.

Verse 23. After a while, it seemed obvious that Jesus was not there. Some other boats from Tiberias came near them (where Jesus had given thanks and they had been fed).

Verse 24. Since the disciples had gone, and Jesus could not be found, they hired the boats to take them to Capernaum, where they would look for Jesus).

Verse 25. Their search was rewarded when they found Him at Capernaum. They, however, could not conceive of how He had gotten there ahead of them. Had He left them before they had spent so much time anxiously seeking Him.

Verse 26. Jesus characteristically goes right past their question and begins trying to teach them the spiritual lesson which their feeding was a sign for. He says that they only experienced the filling of their bellies, not the miracle that it pointed to - who Christ is, and that He truly offers those that have faith to perceive it. Material satisfaction had been their only reaction.

Verse 27. Jesus emphatically (Verily, verily) admonishes them not to work for perishable meat which can sustain physical life for a short time. Rather, they should be seeking the food which endures unto life everlasting. This food is spiritual and needs to be taken in only once, because it abides eternally within, thus sustains life without change, and continually. This can only come from the Son of man. He, as the Perfect Man, alone has the right and power to give this food to everlasting life. God the Father has given Jesus the gift to give others - The Father has solemnly set Him apart and sealed Him for this mission and proven His authority by many signs above any human ability. The closing of this sentence with God the Father emphasizes the Father (God) is with the Son of Man (Jesus).

Verse 28. The group then asks what they are to do to work to obtain the spiritual reward. They still cling to the materialistic meaning of work - what they must do to earn God's approval and acceptance.

Verse 29. Jesus corrects this wrongful conception by telling them that it is God's plan that they believe on Jesus as the "Sent One" from God. This is not a work that man can originate; it is the work of God that men believe on Jesus. This belief includes simple faith but also includes the effort towards faith and effort that comes from this belief. Faith is a continuous thing. Faith brings forth works that are based on that faith.

Lesson XI

John 6:30-59.

"30 They said therefore unto him, What sign showest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work?

31 Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

32 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

33 For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

34 Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.

35 ¶ And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

36 But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not.

37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

41 ¶ The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.

42 And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?

43 Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves.

44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

46 Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.

47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

48 I am that bread of life.

49 Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

50 This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.

51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

52 ¶ The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can

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this man give us his flesh to eat?

53 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

54 Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

55 For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

56 He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.

57 As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

58 This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.

59 These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Caper'na-um."

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Verse 30. After Jesus had told them that they are to believe on Him whom God hath sent, they ask for a further sign, that their belief may be based on what they can see. Jesus had accused them of misunderstanding His previous sign of the feeding of the 5,000. They sought a greater sign, one from Heaven (Matthew 16:1). If they see it, they will believe Jesus. Whatever Jesus says must be backed up by works.

Verse 31. They then bring up the manna in the desert that God provided - bread from Heaven to eat. This they described as a miracle of Moses, which sustained the Israelites in the desert for 40 years. A Jewish tradition said that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Redeemer would cause the manna to fall from Heaven even as the first Redeemer (Moses) had done. The crowd was prepared to accept Jesus as Messiah if He could also produce this manna from Heaven. What this actually points to is the Word of God as the sustainer of spiritual life, which feeds the soul - distributing a perennial stream of wisdom and knowledge.

Verse 32. Jesus responds, again emphatically, that God, not Moses, provided the manna from Heaven, which was but a symbol of the true spiritual food. That true spiritual food - bread from Heaven - God had brought to men by bringing down from Heaven His only begotten Son, whereby life eternal was God's gift to all people. This was the true bread that fulfills and sustains unto eternal life. Without this bread, the world has no eternal life.

Verse 34. They reply by asking for Him to henceforth supply them with this bread. As yet, they do not comprehend that this bread was a one-time gift, so they ask for a continual supply.

Verse 35. Jesus clarifies the whole message by identifying Himself as the bread of life - the One who gives life. Compare

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this with other terms Jesus used, such as the tree of life, the water of life, words of life, the Light of the World, the Good Shepherd, the Resurrection and the Life, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, the True Vine, the Fountain of Life.

To experience this life, a person has to do 2 things: 1. Come to Jesus - outward action; 2. Believe in Jesus - that takes place within in thought and certainty. This person will neither hunger nor thirst - both point to the Passover and the Last Supper concerning the bread and wine.

Verse 36. The gift was offered but they had not taken it. Jesus emphasizes that they have seen Jesus work and they had not believed. He Himself was what all the signs pointed to, and the Jews could not read the signs, therefore they did not recognize Jesus for who He is.

Verse 37. This in no way is discouraging to Jesus. God's purpose would not fail, but was further proof that Jesus was fully carrying out the Father's will.

All those that The Father has chosen He gives to the Son. All of these Jesus will accept and 'in no wise cast out'. He was not casting out those who didn't believe because they were not truly His. They hadn't come to Him in faith.

Verse 38. All this points to Jesus' role as coming to Earth to fulfill the will of the Father who sent Him. Only here does Jesus describe His descent from Heaven.

Verse 39. All that the Father has given Him, none will be lost, and Jesus will raise them up, at the last day. The church, being filled with new life, will be transformed and glorified. All depends on the Father's will, but it is the will of the Son that the church will be raised up.

Verse 40. The will of the Father is that those who accept and believe on His Son receive eternal life. This eternal life begins in the present, though the future of it is included. The raising up that Jesus will do is the consummation.

Verses 41-50. Christ's relationship with the Father and His mission. Then with His relationship with His flesh. The mystery of the Incarnation and the coming Atonement.

How can the source and sustainer of life be in Jesus who is truly a man.

Verse 41. The Jews were hung up on the idea that Jesus had called Himself the bread of life from Heaven, bringing life to the world. They murmured "at Him." They most likely had murmured among themselves before bringing it to Christ directly.

Verse 42. In order to add facts to their contempt of Jesus,

Lesson XI continued

they bring up His family. He was the son of Joseph and Mary who they were familiar with. There was no question about that. So why was Jesus now claiming that He came down from Heaven?

Verse 43. Jesus hears their murmuring and admonishes them for such idle and pointless talk. These Jews are completely unable to understand the spiritual truth. They were only able to perceive what was before their eyes.

Verse 44. Jesus reveals that spiritual discernment is a Gift of the Father who sent Him and that anyone who believes, He will raise up at the last day. Jesus takes up and completes what the Father has begun. This is the sovereign act of love towards men. The coming to Jesus is regarded as a completed act, not one in progress.

Verse 45. The drawing of the Father is shown to have been promised in the Old Testament prophets. The dual nature of God's drawing is explained: the hearing is the external communication (the human element), the learning is the internal understanding. Promised in the prophets (Isaiah 54:13) is the direct divine teaching of God. This is fulfilled in the Person and Words of Christ as interpreted by the Holy Spirit to men. This teaching is not merely conversation of a divine nature, but part of a life long relationship with God as His students. Those that hear God's call answer at once, though the understanding part may take place gradually, due to our limitations. Nevertheless, the call is certain as is the outcome - all will come to Jesus.

Verse 46. All teaching and understanding cannot give us the ability to see God. Only He who is truly God can naturally see God. The voice of God was in communication with men under the Old Covenant, and it was recorded in the Old Testament Scriptures. All this gave experience with and information about God's will and nature, but at a distance beyond men's ability to truly understand. When Jesus came, He showed us by everything He said and did exactly who and what God is, and especially His love and mercy for us in the ultimate self sacrifice of the cross.

This also emphasizes Christ's existence with God before the Incarnation, and as well as being sent by God, He also continues in the closest dependence upon God for His mission and in the closest personal relationship with God.

Verse 47. All that went before leads to this statement. He that believes - has eternal life. Verily, verily, again emphasizes the most serious and dramatic truth of these words.

Verse 48. Possibly one of the clearest ways to understand the gift that God was providing for man. What was essential for man to live unto God is to accept that gift. Jesus says, "I am that bread of life."

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Verse 49. A contrast is drawn - those forefathers of the Jews ate the manna (considered heavenly food) and they died. That bread was only material. It was not meant to be the bread of life.

Verse 50. The bread of life has come - the true manna which is Jesus; this bread, when eaten, gives eternal life.

Verse 51. Being the living bread, Jesus can provide of the life which He possesses. Whoever therefore receives Him accepts this element of life.

Jesus says that the bread He will give is His flesh. Thus its fulfillment was still in the future at this time, not to be complete until His work was finished. Being truly both God and man, He describes His offering of His flesh, as the Perfect, Sinless man, for the life of the world. Human nature is described by the word 'flesh'. Because of sin, all flesh was tainted and condemned to die. Through Jesus, the flesh is Redeemed, the penalty for sin is paid, thus new life is given.

Verse 52. The Jews' reaction was to argue among themselves. They were not all ready to reject Jesus' Teaching. They were discussing the problem raised by the last words of Jesus concerning eating the flesh, now identified as represented by the living bread.

Verse 53. Jesus then develops the previous thought by talking about flesh and blood - indicating that the spilling of blood means a violent death. Both are of the son of man as Jesus represented humanity. The flesh indicates the virtue of Christ's perfect humanity as living for us; the blood represents the virtue of His humanity as it was subject unto death. Both of these things are offered to us in their substitution for us. Then only Jesus can offer us life as springing from Him. In ourselves, we have no life, but only in Christ is our life.

Verse 54. The verb used here includes the idea of a continuous action, not completed only once. It also indicates that this eating is a positive and enjoyable process which brings life eternal, to be raised up at the last day.

Verse 55. The highest signs of life follow from taking in Christ's flesh and blood for such is their power. His flesh is true meat - standing in the same relationship that food is sustaining physical life does. His flesh must be taken in and digested, becoming nourishment to the soul.

Verse 56. In man's partaking of His flesh, Christ imparts His humanity to the believer, thereby the believer can rightly be described as abiding in Christ, and Christ to abide in the believer. This possession in the believer is eternal life - a certainty of resurrection unto the presence of Christ.



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Verse 57. The same combination is described in a different way. God is described as the 'living' Father, similar to the often written phrase 'the living God'.

Jesus speaks of His relationship with the Father, not only in His role as the Word of God, but also as the Son who came down to be born of flesh and blood the Son of Man. The relationship of Jesus with the Father is closely related with the relationship the believer comes into in taking in Jesus as Savior. The Son to the Father, the believer to Jesus, and thereby the believer also with the Father. Just as the essence of the life of Christ is devotion to the Father, so also should be the devotion of the believer to Jesus.

The future tense 'he shall' live by me points to the yet to be completed sacrifice, resurrection, and exaltation of Jesus.

Verse 58. As the manna was a type of prefigurement of Christ's coming and value. The forefathers had eaten the manna, and died. Now the true manna has come down from Heaven, whose value is eternal.

The singular "he" emphasizes the personal and individual exercising belief that issues in everlasting life.

Verse 59. Though it does mention in John 18:20 that it was Jesus' custom of being in a synagogue on the Sabbath, this is the only specifically stated occasion in John's Gospel. People were gathered for worship, a solemn assembly. This particular synagogue was in Capernaum.

This leads to a great trial of the disciples' faith. Some would go away, Jesus' teaching too hard to bear.

Lesson XII

John 6:60-71.

"60 ¶ Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is a hard saying; who can hear it?

61 When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?

62 What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?

63 It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.

64 But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.

65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

66 ¶ From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

67 Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?

68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

69 And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

70 Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?

71 He spake of Judas Iscar'i-ot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve."

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Verse 60. After the lengthy discourse about Jesus being the bread of life - that one had to eat of His flesh and drink of His blood, a group of His followers were talking about these sayings. They called them hard sayings. They could not accept this new idea of life through death. Thus many both visibly and invisibly separated themselves from Jesus. They considered the subject not unintelligible, but offensive. It called for complete submission and surrender of self to Jesus. They could not understand how anyone could accept this.

Verse 61. When Jesus realized that the disciples were talking among themselves about their difficulty in these sayings, He asks them if what He said offended them!

Verse 62. Jesus then asks what their reaction would be if they were to see Him ascend again to His home in heaven. This suggests that the spiritual nature of His glorified body would erase any offense relating to His flesh. By referring to Himself as the Son of Man, He refers to His being in heaven before the Incarnation. In His incarnation, He brought His Sonship to earth. After His crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, His Sonship would return to heaven.

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Verse 63. The spirit is the power of life which connects and comes from the unseen eternal God. The flesh is connected to the material world. To just follow the flesh and what can be learned by the five senses will in no wise benefit the spiritual part of man. To understand Jesus, one is required not to just go by fleshly observations and thoughts concerning Jesus' words and deeds. Jesus emphasizes that the words He speaks 'are spirit, and they are life.' The revealing of the true relationship of men to the promised Savior are words which have power to convey what they essentially are: words of life.

Verse 64. Jesus tells them that some of them are not true believers, who He had known from the beginning. This is assumed to include the eventual betrayal by Judas Iscariot. The allusion to Christ's coming sacrifice is given and then the mention of the one who would deliver up Jesus to those against Him.

Verse 65. The disciples would have to bear the trial of treachery to be revealed within their group. They might misunderstand how and why Jesus had chosen someone who He knew would betray Him. Judas was chosen but he had not come to believe on Christ. He kept to his own selfish motives.

In one sense, life is the unfolding of the divine will through time. The will of God and the will of man come together in a mysterious relationship. The will of God to choose those who will believe - as He knows who these are - that also choose to believe.

Verse 66. The former murmuring among the followers of Jesus now led many to leave the group. Some disagreed but stayed, example - Judas. Those that left went back to their former beliefs and life. They walked no more with Jesus.

Verse 67. Jesus then asks the 12 chosen apostles if they would also leave Him. That John has not hitherto distinctly mentioned the 12 or their being chosen assumes that the reader should already be familiar with this fact. Therefore, his mention of the 12 seems perfectly natural.

Verse 68. As representative of the 12, Peter replies that they have found in Jesus all that they had been seeking. Peter acknowledges that specific teachings of Jesus communicated to him the truth of life.

Verse 69. The 'we' emphasizes those closest to Jesus have listened devoutly, and have come to know, and thereupon to believe His words. These words reveal the absolute character of the Savior which was centered in His mission of saving sinners.

Verse 70. Jesus replies - but to all of them, not to just Peter. He again reveals that in spite of what Peter has said as

Lesson XII continued

their representative, yet Jesus had chosen the betrayer, even as He had chosen the others, to this special position. Judas wanted to direct Christ's divine power toward his own selfish ends, which seem to have been nationalistic and materialistic.

Verse 71. Judas is further identified as Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. Iscariot signifies that he was from a place called Kerioth, a town of Moab. He was one of the 12.

John 7:1-13.

"1 After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him.

2 Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand.

3 His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest.

4 For there is no man that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, show thyself to the world.

5 For neither did his brethren believe in him.

6 Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready.

7 The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.

8 Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come.

9 When he had said these words unto them, he abode still in Galilee.

10 ¶ But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.

11 Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he?

12 And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people.

13 Howbeit no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews."

7:1-13. The first part is centered around the feast of Tabernacles, which commemorated the first possession of the Promised Land. There were many opinions and waverings among the people. They posed many questions concerning Jesus.

The first 13 verses reveal the position of Jesus at that time. Continued teaching in Judea was impossible at this time, because of the Jewish leaders that sought His death. His followers continued to put pressure on Him to demonstrate His power publicly. The masses gathered in Jerusalem were greatly divided - many faithful, many distrustful. Those with greatest influence kept discouraging any attention being paid to Jesus and His claims.

Lesson XII continued

Verse 1. After the crisis brought about by the feeding of the 5,000, Jesus traveled only in Galilee. He would not go into Judea, because of the previous visit which had provoked the Jewish leaders to begin plotting to get rid of Him.

Verse 2. The Feast of Tabernacles was near, considered as holiest and greatest among the festivals. Since it came about 6 months after the events recorded in John 6, some details of this period are given in Matthew, chapters 12-17, and 21.

Verse 3. That the term 'His brethren' is used, some have speculated that this suggests that Joseph had children from a previous marriage, and it was these older brothers that felt they had the right to Jesus' advice (see Mark 3:21,31). Since Jesus had not gone to the Last Passover, He should go now. They are concerned for the followers of Jesus that were gained in His previous visits into Judea and especially in Jerusalem. They decided that these followers needed their faith strengthened by what Jesus could wrought in the way of works.

This also suggests that Jesus traveled in Galilee with only His closest disciples, thereby a small number. At the Feast, many of those who accepted Jesus would travel there from all over the country, as well as those who lived in Jerusalem and nearby.

Verse 4. These brethren were concerned that Jesus had been doing works among strangers in various places in Galilee and beyond Galilee's borders. They didn't understand why Jesus would spend His time in such obscure locations if He wanted to become famous. They completely misunderstood His motives. They thought He should be doing these things where He would be noticed, especially by those who could be helpful to build His renown. This shows their own truly selfish human nature.

Verse 5. Their advice showed that they did not believe in Him. In response, Jesus tells them that this is not the right time for Him to reveal Himself, as the working out of the divine plan. Because they thought as the world thought, their coming or going would not bring anything new to gain public attention. Being in harmony with the world, their time was always ready. Jesus, however, knew that His appearance in Jerusalem would provoke open hostility among those already against Him, and also a misguided zeal of those who would make Him king.

Verse 7. Because they were of the world, the world could not hate them. Because Jesus was not of the world, the world hated Him. No one wants to admit their sins, or their sinful nature. The whole ministry brings this fact out in the open, whereupon each person is forced to make a choice - yes, they are a sinner and need a Savior, or no, they are not a sinner. They want to hold on to everything they have, and do not want to be saved from that. That is why the majority of people hate Jesus - from then till the

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present.

Verse 8. The question is brought up again. After all the things Jesus has said, nothing has been learned or understood. Jesus repeats His original answer: He is not going up to the feast because His time has not fully come. This was not the Feast of the fullness of Time. That was to be The Passover.

Verse 9. Having said these things, He remained in Galilee.

Verse 10. When His brethren went on up to Jerusalem, He also went up. Going to Jerusalem is commonly called going up because Jerusalem was the highest area in Israel, being on a mountain. Jesus' journey was on the sly (in secret).

Verse 11. The Jewish leaders were on the lookout for Jesus. They asked if anyone had seen Him.

Verse 12. Among the crowds of people, many were also talking about Him. Some were saying that He was a good man. Others were saying the opposite - that He was a deceiver, and that He led people astray.

Verse 13. Because of fear of the Jewish leaders, who had not yet pronounced their judgment concerning Jesus, no one spoke openly about Jesus. This gives an indication of the influence these leaders had over the people. This would continue up to, and including, the crucifixion.

Next, Jesus goes to the Temple in the middle of the feast, and teaches the people.

Lesson XIII

John 7:14-39.

"4 ¶ Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught.

15 And the Jews marveled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?

16 Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

17 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

18 He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.

19 Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?

20 The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?

21 Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel.

22 Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;) and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man.

23 If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day?

24 Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

25 ¶ Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill?

26 But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?

27 Howbeit we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.

28 Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not.

29 But I know him; for I am from him, and he hath sent me.

30 Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.

31 And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?

32 ¶ The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him.

33 Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me.

34 Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come.

35 Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the dispersed among the

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Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles?

36 What manner of saying is this that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come?

37 ¶ In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

38 He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)"

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The feast typically lasted for 7 days. At the time of Jesus, an eighth day had been added as the 'last day' of the feast (Leviticus 23:36).

In the first 10 verses, Jesus explains the source and how this may be tested in His teaching. He emphasized false interpretations of the Law that were against the spirit and history of the Law.

Jesus responded to three groups: the Jews, inhabitants of Jerusalem, and envoys from the chief priests and Pharisees.

Verse 14. It was about in the middle of the feast - the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> day - that Jesus went to the Temple and began teaching. This is the first time that Jesus is recorded as teaching in public, in the Temple.

Verse 15. The general population that observed Jesus teaching were surprised that Jesus talked as being familiar with the literary traditions of the time, supposedly only known and practiced by the scribes and the popular teachers of the Pharisees. They knew that Jesus had not been educated in the Temple schools. They were amazed at His self-education, and resulting success, but did not accept His Messianic claims. It would never occur to them that He had been taught by God.

Verse 16. Jesus answers the question about His being self-taught. His doctrine is infinitely above the teaching of the popular Rabbis. His doctrine was the divine Truth, and its source in the only Source of Truth, the Creator Himself.

Verse 17. Jesus goes on to explain that anyone who seeks to know and do the will of God, would thereby be familiar with the doctrine of God. That person would then be able to recognize whether Jesus was speaking the True doctrine of God, or just making things up on His own.

Verse 18. When someone spends their time talking about themselves and how smart or great they are, they are certainly seeking their own glory or fame. That is sinful - seeking renown



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and being full of pride.

Jesus describes the opposite path: to seek the glory of the One who sent Him. To have no self-interest or desire of gain maintains their righteousness, and their testimony is true, both in thought and in action.

Verse 19. The Jews professed great devotion to Moses and to following The Law. Jesus accuses them of not keeping the Law because they had not grasped the true spirit of the Law but clung to the letter only. Their ignorance concerning God's true message in the Old Testament concerning Jews, led them now to go to the greatest extent against Jesus, seeking to kill the very One who had come to fulfill the Law.

Verse 20. The crowd made up mostly of pilgrims was not yet aware of the current design of the religious leaders. Their reaction was to say that He must be possessed by some evil influence to think someone was out to kill Him. They could not see any reason for Jesus to think of such a drastic plot against Him. Who could possibly be interested in killing Jesus?

Verse 21. Jesus answered, saying that the Jews and the multitude only marveled at what Jesus did and said. They should have been able to recognize the true meaning of these things. They should have perceived how Jesus fulfilled the spirit of the Law as God had intended it. They also could not see that Jesus in coming to fulfill the Law was in fact offering them Salvation and Redemption.

Jesus mentions one work - the special healing done on the Sabbath. Their reaction had been surprise, and nothing more. Some may have nevertheless gone on to faith in Jesus.

Verse 22. The ordinance of circumcision was not started by Moses, but goes back to Abraham. The Mosaic law concerning the Sabbath was a later addition. The two ordinances seemed to be in conflict - yet were accommodated in a particular way. This refers to Jesus' justification of restoring the impotent man on the Sabbath.

Verse 23. If the eighth day (the lawful day for circumcision) fell on a Sabbath, it was still to be done. The eighth day Law was not to be broken. The contrast is between the effect of circumcision which made the person physically and symbolically a member of the Jewish nation (and God's people), and the healing of the paralyzed man, which restored him to health and active life in the community. How much more right was Jesus in the complete healing?

Verse 24. Jesus advises them not to judge according only to a superficial judgment, on the outward aspect only. They were to

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judge according to the truth, which is always and necessarily righteous.

Verse 25. Some of those from Jerusalem who were aware of the plans of the leaders, were not committed to them. When accused, Jesus accuses the accusers.

Verse 26. They have observed that Jesus has been openly teaching in the Temple, but the leaders have not said anything to Him. Their conclusion is that maybe they know that Jesus is the Christ. If they sought His death, why would they allow Him to publicly speak and teach with authority in the Temple?

Verse 27. On the other hand, the crowd speculates that since they know where Jesus came from, and they know His family, that He therefore could not be the Christ. They think that the promised Messiah would have a mysterious origin. They considered Jesus' origin in Nazareth rather than Bethlehem. One of their traditions spoke of the Messiah appearing suddenly (from Daniel 7:13 or Isaiah 53:8).

Verse 28. Jesus was familiar with their partial understanding and therefore their conclusion which they drew from that understanding. Jesus loudly spoke to them, saying that they actually did know Him and where He came from. They also knew that He was sent by God and God was true. He adds that they did not really know God.

Jesus gives His testimony openly and solemnly. He acknowledges that they know the superficial truth about His home, and family. On the One who sent Him, Jesus relies only. He is the One with the Power, Authority, and Strength. They thought they knew all they needed to know about Jesus; they also thought they knew God. Their boast was vain.

Verse 29. Jesus knows God because He is from Him, and sent by Him. All is from the Father.

Verse 30. That Jesus claimed to be sent from God was the last straw. They sought to take Him. He had gone too far. Because His hour was not yet come, none laid hands on Him. They had no power over Him.

Verse 31. Many of the multitude who observed all these things, in contrast to the leaders, believed on Jesus. They accepted what He said and believed the miracles. When they compare what Christ will do and what Jesus had done - they question whether the Christ will do more than 'this man hath done?' This comes out as speculation without coming to the conclusion that Jesus must be the Christ!

Verse 32. Some of the Pharisees heard what people were saying

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about Jesus, suggesting that He could be sent from God, that He may be the Christ. They got together with the chief priests and decided to do something to stop this from going any further. They planned to send some of the Temple guard to take Jesus away.

Verse 33. Jesus continued speaking to all those nearby which now included the officers sent to arrest Him. Jesus told them that He will be with them only a little while (it was about 6 months until the Last Passover). The term 'I go' emphasizes a personal choice, with an end to be gained, and a separation. He is going unto Him that sent Him. This suggests a return to the One Who had given Jesus the mission, and power and authority to carry it out.

Verse 34. When He is gone, they will look for Him, having experienced His power, and love, and mercy. They will remember His words and desire to hear them again. He will not be found, for He will be in a place they cannot go to.

Verse 35. Those who claimed to be the authority on religious matters are off by themselves (the Jews). They are expressing surprise and disdain: "Where will this man go that we won't be able to find him?"

They question if He will leave Israel and go to the Jews in the Gentile lands. Was Jesus seriously considering teaching these isolated groups of Jews in foreign lands? They considered this irrational, out of the question.

Verse 36. They are still shaken by Jesus' words and question what they could really mean by repeating them again. They seem to sense that there must be a significant meaning within them that they cannot fathom.

Verse 37 records the address of Jesus which took place on the final, 'great day of the feast.' This day closed the whole festival and was kept as a Sabbath (Leviticus 23:36). Jesus was standing among a crowd and, moved by some circumstance, began speaking forcefully. On each of the seven days of the feast, for the morning sacrifice, libations of water were brought in a golden vessel to the temple, while Isaiah 12:3 was sung.

Though uncertain if water was brought on the eighth day - if not then this would be a more appropriate and dramatic saying of the words: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." Jesus is describing the need for salvation in man, and that faith in Him not only would satisfy the person's thirst spiritually but it would make that person a river of living water that would flow out to others. This idea was closely related to many of the figures that point to it in the Old Testament, especially those in Exodus: the water from the rock, the manna, the brazen serpent.

The sense of need (thirst) comes first, the satisfaction of faith comes second, and third the fulness of faith overflows for the refreshing of others.

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Verse 39. Jesus was speaking of the Holy Spirit, that those who believed on Him would receive - but this did not take place until Pentecost after Christ had ascended up into glory as our High Priest and King. Several passages in the Old Testament allude to this event: Isaiah 44:3, 58:11, Joel 2:28; Zechariah 14:8; Exodus 17:6; Numbers 20:11.

Lesson XIV

John 7:40-53.

"40 ¶ Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet.

41 Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee?

42 Hath not the Scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?

43 So there was a division among the people because of him.

44 And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him.

45 ¶ Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him?

46 The officers answered, Never man spake like this man.

47 Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived?

48 Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?

49 But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.

50 Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,)

51 Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?

52 They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.

53 ¶ And every man went unto his own house."

Verse 40. Many of the people who heard Jesus' teaching at various times during the festival had generally reached the conclusion about Jesus that "of a truth this is the Prophet." Apparently, some thought of the great Prophet promised by Moses (Deuteronomy 18:15) who they wrongly thought was not also the Messiah. Others seem to think that one of the ancient prophets, like Elijah, would rise from the dead before the appearance of the Messiah.

Verse 41. Some said that Jesus was the Christ. Others questioned whether Christ should come from Galilee. In saying this, they thought they knew all the facts about Jesus. They neglected to look further and find out the truth. By thinking they knew enough they lost everything. Does this sound familiar?

Verse 42. These mistaken people knew the Scriptures that spoke of the Messiah: He would be the seed of David, of the tribe of Judah, and born in the city of David - Bethlehem. (Isaiah 11:1; Jeremiah 23:5; Micah 5:2.) To know half the Truth and not its fulfillment before their eyes, is a tragic irony.

Verse 43. These varying opinions caused a division among the people.

Verse 44. Some of the multitude had turned against Jesus and

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wanted to seize Him, but not being a majority of the crowd, they prudently did not attempt to lay hands on Him.

Verse 45. The officers that had been sent to bring Jesus to the chief priests and Pharisees, came back empty-handed. They were strongly questioned as to why they had failed to fulfill their orders. It appears that these soldiers had observed Jesus for several days, watching for the right opportunity to take Him. They were looking for some excuse in what He said to charge Him with some crime, such as inciting the people to revolt, or speaking blasphemies.

Verse 46. After listening to Jesus - they not only found no fault in His words, but could not find anything resembling what their bosses had accused Jesus of. Their observation: "Never man spake like this man," was that Jesus' words were inspiring, full of wisdom and glorifying to God.

Now the question, would these pious leaders accept the report of their officers? Would they commend them for a job well done, and admit that they have been mistaken? No!

Verse 47. The Pharisees, their minds already made up, now accuse the officers of being taken in and deceived by Jesus. Their best reason to back up their position seems totally self-serving.

Verse 48. "Have any of the rulers or Pharisees believed on Him?" The obvious answer is no. It has been observed often by historians that the wealthy, the powerful, and the rulers of this world have generally rejected God's Truth in Jesus. Their vested interests in this world are much more important to hold onto, rather than giving any of it up to gain a place in the eternal kingdom.

These words also suggest that since they were the authoritative experts of religion, they were the wise ones that all others should listen to and follow.

Verse 49. They explain that all the people that don't know the law are cursed. They are common and uneducated and contemptible.

Verse 50. Nicodemus (who had come to Jesus before, by night) spoke up. He was a member of the Sanhedrin, their equal.

Verse 51. He asks if their common practice is to pass judgment on a man without hearing what the man has to say about his words or deeds. Nicodemus has just observed the report of the officers who have reported what they (a group together of the same opinion) have seen and heard concerning Jesus. They reached a conclusion.

Jesus is innocent. Now these leaders dismiss their report and judge Jesus without taking the time to seek the truth, by their

Lesson XIV continued

own witness of what Jesus does and says.

Verse 52. Predictably, they do not speak to the issue that Nicodemus raises - their common practice by law. They merely turn on him and accuse him of being from Galilee, and dismiss him and Jesus by saying that no prophet in Scripture came from there.

Verse 53. Apparently, Nicodemus was highly enough regarded, that no further action or discussion was to take place. Their meeting broke up without any decisions being reached. The festival was over; everyone went home.

John 8:1-11. The Woman Taken in Adultery.

Verse 1. Jesus went to the Mount of Olives where it was His custom to spend the night.

Verse 2. Early the following morning, He went to the temple and sat down at one of the places where teachers normally sat. After doing so, many people gathered around Him.

Verse 3. At this time, the Jewish leaders (scribes and Pharisees) brought a woman who had been brought to them as taken while in the act of adultery. They pushed her in the midst of the people in front of Jesus.

Verse 4. They tell Jesus that she was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Her guilt was without question. How would this be possible, and where was the also guilty man?

Verse 5. They then think they had the right to remind Jesus what Moses commanded through the Law that such a person should be stoned to death. (Deuteronomy 22:23.) They put to Jesus the question as to whether they should follow this law or not.

Verse 6. Their reason was to tempt Jesus to say something that would give them an excuse to accuse Him of a crime against God's Law. It was against Roman Law to put anyone to death without their judgment. To affirm the Mosaic Law was to judge contrary to the Roman Law. On the other hand, to deny the Mosaic judgment which would then make any claim of being the Messiah of God suspect. This would also cause Him to lose favor with the multitudes. Their purpose was to force Jesus to make one of these two errors.

Jesus, rather than quickly answering them, stooped and began to act as if He was writing in the dust, in effect ignoring their test. As following His own thought - not willing to walk into their obvious trap.

Verse 7. They were not about to give up, and so they pressed their query. Jesus stood up, facing them, and said, "He that is

Lesson XIV continued

without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." In this way, Jesus caused each of these accusers to look into their own consciences, and see their own sinful inclinations. In this way each one had to face their own sinful natures. They withdrew from any claims of innocence. They may not be guilty of this particular sin, but that in no way gave them the right to claim innocence.

The Law dealt with what was seen and heard; the Gospel of Jesus penetrates to the very soul. Jesus questions these men's right to execute legal punishment. These men were not the appointed instruments of the Law. Jesus questions their right to see if anyone had the nerve to claim such a right.

Verse 8. Jesus again stoops down and writes with His finger on the ground. He had said all that was needful.

Verse 9. After these words, each of these accusers began to leave, one by one, from the eldest down to the youngest. The woman was left alone with Jesus.

Verse 10. Jesus stood up again and, looking around, asked the woman where her accusers were. None were left to condemn her.

Verse 11. She responded by answering His question - none were left. Jesus did not condemn her either - telling her to go and sin no more. Jesus accepts that she is guilty but does not condemn her. He does not disagree with the Mosaic Law, nor the legal punishment. These men were not the appointed judges of the Law. Neither could they force Jesus to disobey the imposed Roman Law that denied the Jews the right of putting people to death.

John 8:12-20. Further Teaching.

Jesus again addresses the multitude, here comparing the Israelites through the wilderness, the sign of God's presence and leadership. In this courtyard of the Temple, there were great golden candelabra lighted the first night of the Feast of the Tabernacles, and each succeeding night. These may have suggested this figure of light to Jesus also. They symbolized the fiery Pillar which guided the people during the Exodus.

While that light was temporary, Jesus describes Himself as the Living Light which shall guide people out of the darkness into the Light of Life. Being the light of the world includes all people of all nations. The light is not just something to see, but something to receive within, becoming a life principle henceforth, in Christ.

Verse 13. Light is obvious in its shining - an attribute of Light. These Pharisees are blind to its shining in Jesus. They claim equal knowledge of the matter and legal standing, being multiple witnesses that deny His assertion. Many witnesses always win against one witness for Himself. Their conclusion is that Jesus is lying.



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Verse 14. Jesus, in answering, states that even though He is one witness and speaking for Himself, His words are true. His quality of knowledge was far above theirs. His divine knowledge includes His past as God's Son, His present mission, and the future role He will play unto eternity. All this He knows from whence He came. No man has any knowledge of such things. It is this unique knowledge which allows only Jesus to reveal the Truth of the Father.

These men have no clue about these things: where He came from, and where He is going.

Verse 15. These men could only judge "after the flesh." They felt no need for further knowledge or deeper insight. They went by appearance only. This was not the time for Jesus to judge man.

Verse 16. If, however, He were to judge, His judgment would be true. Since Jesus was in continuous communion with the Author of all Truth, He therefore was and would ever be the perfect Judge.

Verse 17. Therefore, His testimony was in complete agreement with the Father's, this satisfying the requirements of the Law for two witnesses to testify.

Verse 18. Jesus bears witness of Himself, and the Father who sent Him bears witness of Him. The whole ministry of Jesus bears witness of the Father.

Verse 19. Still in the dark, these men ask where Jesus' Father is, still thinking in worldly terms. They were not satisfied with appeal to an absent witness - so they do not ask who, but where His Father is. They could not accept just Christ's words. This showed that they could not understand who Jesus is, and also who His Father is. If they had recognized Him as the Christ of God, they would have known the Father also. If they had listened carefully to His teaching and observed the signs - the miracles and the healings - with understanding that all of this revealed that Jesus was sent from God - for only God has the power and authority to bring them to pass. Thereby believing in the Son revealing the Father, and the Father working through the Son.

Verse 20. Jesus had been speaking in the treasury, in the Temple where people came to give gifts to the Temple. This was the most public part of the Temple. Because His time was not yet come, no one laid hands on Jesus.

Lesson XV

John 8:21-30.

"21 ¶ Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come.

22 Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come.

23 And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world.

24 I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.

25 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning.

26 I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.

27 They understood not that he spake to them of the Father.

28 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

29 And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.

30 As he spake these words, many believed on him."

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One object of faith! One consequence of unbelief.

Verse 21. Jesus continues with ideas which He had previously spoken about at the feast. He again tells them that He is going away. When He is gone, they will look for Him but not find Him; on the contrary, they will be without faith in Him as Savior. Jesus goes back to heaven; without faith in Him, they cannot come.

This rings out as a warning to these people of Judea and Jerusalem in particular. They will not realize their spiritual need until Jesus has gone. Their seeking will be in vain. They will be looking for deliverance from great calamity - but they will fail and die in their sins. Their separation will be final.

Verse 22. To the Jews listening, what Jesus said seemed to claim that He was vastly superior and powerful compared to them. For anyone to make such claims was contemptible. The only thing He could do would be what they could - therefore they consider that He must be talking about suicide. This choice they could not follow. The Jews considered suicide the same as murder. They were mocking Him bitterly.

Verse 23. Jesus draws the distinction between them and Him. He describes the cause of their inability to understand or follow Him. There was a great chasm between the two regions of their origin. Their powers and experiences are limited to the material realm, of flesh. Jesus' source of inspiration, and judgment, is from above. They are of the world. They are unable to see or

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understand the spiritual world.

Verse 24. Because of the great separation, they shall die. This results from the fatal source - sin. Only one way was provided to approach the Father to obtain life - that was the fellowship by faith in Jesus.

Unless they believe that Jesus is the source of life and light and strength, and accept Him, they remain in sin unto death.

Verse 25. They then question Jesus, seeking to get Him to say openly that He claims to be the Christ. He answers that from the beginning He has been speaking the Words of Truth about His origin. That they continue to ask, shows how futile all the Words that He has spoken to them have been. Therefore - futile for Him even now to speak to them.

Verse 26. As a result of the Jews' disbelief, they were not worthy of further revelation on Jesus' part. On the other hand, they are good examples for teaching about judgment. Because the truth comes from God, Jesus is bound to speak the truth. Only the truth has been and will continue to be God's message, and will towards men. Jesus was to deliver God's message, no matter what the effect may be in any particular instance.

His speaking is described as "into the world" that the words may reach throughout the world. Christ stands outside, mediating between two worlds.

Verse 27. The Jews continued to think of an earthly deliverer, whether it was Jesus or someone He represented that would appear at the most opportune time. That Jesus spoke of the Father they missed completely.

Verse 28. Jesus therefore said that it would not be until He had been lifted up on the cross that they will know who He is. This thought includes recognition of His being the Son of God when resurrection and ascension to His Throne of Glory also follows. This shows that Jesus will have fulfilled the mission from the Father, and Jesus will be raised above all in complete union with God. All His work and words were from the Father, who hath taught Him, and which He would soon fulfill.

Verse 29. The communion between Father and Son are continual. Though Jesus was sent meant no separation. The Father is with Jesus as Jesus abides in communion with The Father. The signs are seen in His doing the Perfect will of the Father, which pleases Him. They should read the signs as the effect of the Father's presence.

Verse 30. The effect of these words on many present led them to believe on Him. This was not a simple acceptance of His statements as true. It was faith in the Person in the fullest

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sense, putting their trust in Him being exactly Who He said He is.

John 8:31-44.

"31 ¶ Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;

32 and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

33 They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?

34 ¶ Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.

36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

37 I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you.

38 I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.

39 ¶ They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.

40 But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.

41 Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.

42 Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.

43 Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.

44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do: he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."

Verses 31-44. Some of the believing Jews still cling to the Old Testament ways and merit of descent from Abraham. Jesus continually tries to make them understand the spiritual message of Abraham's faith.

Verse 31. Jesus begins speaking to "those Jews" who believed Him but retained and interpreted His words and promises according to their mistaken views of what the Messiah had come to do for the Nation of Israel. Their ideas were historical (Old Testament), external, and temporal. Jesus continues to stress the spiritual, the internal, and the eternal.

Jesus recognizes that they have the beginnings of faith, but

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they must get past their habitual prejudices and opinions by abiding in His words, and thereby continue to grow in faith in Him, then they will truly be His disciples.

Verse 32. There is a following of those who begin in bondage to the old ways and in ignorance of the truth. But the seed of faith includes the potential to grow into true discipleship. To abide in Christ's word is to grow in knowledge of truth in Christ. This truth brings freedom. This freedom comes from understanding the Truth of all creation, of God's will, and the decision to follow in obedience of that Law, which is simply the Law of unselfish love. Jesus is the example, the Ideal.

Verse 33. These same Jews (assumed to be only a small group among the number mentioned in Verse 30) take Jesus' statement on an earthly level rather than the spiritual. They take exception to what Jesus has said.

They claim to be descended from Abraham, who received the great promises from God of a great nation and eventual rule over the world. They claim to never have been in bondage to any man. All those times of Egypt, Babylon, Syria, and Rome were only temporary, because the people remained as a separate and unique group, never assimilated, nor giving in to them. To their minds, they were already free, so how is it possible that this one teacher can do this when it goes against the consciousness of that nation?

Verse 34. In His reply, Jesus lays bare the basis upon which the principle of true freedom lies. It is opposite of the boasting of descent from Abraham, and the national pride of the Jews.

Jesus goes directly to point out the origin of bondage. Sin is a life of bondage in both thought and deed.

Verse 35. Sin is the broken relationship with God. Bondage to sin cannot lead to becoming a child of God. One living in sin can only be a servant, only temporary, in service to God. In contrast, the Son of God will be with God forever.

Verse 36. Only the true Son of God can bring true freedom. Through Him alone, in fellowship with Him, can one gain true freedom, unchangeable forever. Only through this freedom can one willingly follow God's Law. Those living in sin are bound to the law of sin.

To be "free indeed" suggests a reality in essence from within rather than something to be seen or understood.

Verse 37. Jesus returns to the claims of their being of Abraham's seed. He accepts their claim as valid in the natural sense - they are sons of Abraham outwardly. But their true intentions will be to destroy the One True Son.

Their belief in Him is according to what they think He should

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do. When they realize that that is not to be, that Jesus' mission is opposed to their aspirations, they will turn against Him and seek His death. They sought outward material progress and not the inward spiritual growth which Jesus offered to them. Though they have accepted Jesus' words, nevertheless, these words found no place of good soil to continue to grow and mature.

Verse 38. Jesus compares His source of behavior with theirs. His is based on His being with the Father. Theirs is based on their sin, whose father is Satan. Jesus has a perfect and direct knowledge of God. Even though no human is naturally able to see or know God directly, yet through Christ the believer can see and know God, now imperfectly, later more fully. Jesus does not name the father they follow until later in Verse 44.

Verse 39. The Jews claim Abraham as their father, not only by inheritance, but also a personal relationship. Jesus replies that if they were Abraham's children, they would do works as Abraham did.

Verse 40. Now they are doing what Abraham would never do. They seek to put Jesus to death. Jesus has been telling and showing them the truth about God and His mercy towards them. They have turned it down. Abraham would not have done this. Jesus has condescended to being a man to bring them the truth, but this has also made Him vulnerable to the violence of the Jews' hostility. Abraham had faithfully obeyed God and honored those who spoke in His name, such as Melchizedek and the angels (Genesis 14; 18).

Verse 41. Jesus again says that they are doing the works of their father, and He obviously does not mean Abraham. They take this as an accusation that they are bastards, born out of wedlock, born of the sin of their parents. This they dramatically deny, now claiming God as their Father.

Thinking that Jesus has accepted them as Abraham's descendants by blood, they add that they are also recipients of Abraham's spiritual nature.

Verse 42. Kinsmanship is truly shown by the natural recognition of those who are related. If their relationship with God were true, they should always recognize God by whatever means He reveals Himself. That they do not recognize Jesus shows that they are not related to God. If they were truly related to God by faith, they would have loved Jesus, and known that He came from the Father on a mission from Him. What offends the Jews in Jesus is that what He does He claims is done in obedience to God.

Verse 43. If the Jews had been the spiritual children of God, they would have recognized His Son. They had also failed to understand His plain teaching about God, and His mission. They could not apprehend the Gospel, nor its source in the Father.

Lesson XV continued

Their inability is traced back to another power that hinders them. Their situation included their own choices.

Verse 44. Jesus finally comes out with the true situation these Jews were involved in. Their behavior followed the lusts or desires of their true father - the devil. Their wills are aligned with his in the sense that they choose their own self-interest, even if involving the persecution and murder of one who disagrees with them.

Jesus calls satan a murderer from the beginning, most likely alluding to the first death when Cain killed Abel. This includes the fall of man in the garden which brought death into the world. The devil speaks falsehood. He seeks his own will, and desires to destroy the works of God, seeking to become like God Himself. The man who speaks a lie, reveals his true nature, which also reveals his relationship with the devil - who is a liar, and the founder of all lying.

A true sign of the righteousness of Christ is that He never told anything close to a lie, but continually spoke the absolute truth, as can only be known and spoken by the One who knew the source of all Truth, God, the Father. He spoke for Him and revealed the Father to all those who would believe.

Lesson XVI

John 8:45-59.

"45 And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not.

46 Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?

47 He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.

48 ¶ Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?

49 Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honor my Father, and ye do dishonor me.

50 And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth.

51 Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.

52 Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death.

53 Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?

54 Jesus answered, If I honor myself, my honor is nothing: it is my Father that honoreth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God:

55 yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying.

56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.

57 Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?

58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

59 Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by."

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Verse 45. Jesus drives His point home. Because He has spoken the truth, they don't believe Him. What He said was not what they wanted to hear. They therefore refused to believe what He said (even though it was true).

Verse 46. Jesus then asks them if anything He has said is opposite to what He does. Has any one of them seen Him sin in any way? Is there any law that He has broken, any lie that He has told? If His life is in righteousness, then His words must be true. If therefore His life and His words are true, why have they not believed Him?

Verse 47. Only people that are spiritually attuned to God can hear and understand the words of God. Because these Jews do not depend on God for life, they are unable to hear God's message.



Lesson XVI continued

Verse 48. The Jews reproach Jesus, expressing what was commonly thought by many of the leaders - that He was an enemy of the status quo - a foe of the Jewish nation, a breaker of the Law, a Samaritan, One who has a devil. They turn what Jesus said about them back at Jesus. They ask, "are we not at last correct." After all of Christ's boasts about a kingdom and fulfilling the Law, "art thou but a Samaritan?"

Verse 49. Jesus answers them that He has no demon, but only speaks concerning His mission which He has to honor His Father. They dishonor Jesus by not recognizing the Father in the Son. Jesus disregards their calling Him a Samaritan - calling Him one of a different race.

Verse 50. Jesus is not concerned that they dishonor Him, because He is not seeking His own glory. The One who seeks honor for the Son is the Father, and by their not honoring Him, bring condemnation upon themselves. By not honoring the Son, they at the same time dishonor the Father.

Verse 51. Jesus begins His next statement with verily, verily - signifying the importance of what He is about to say. He brings a new emphasis: the importance of action in keeping His words. That person shall never look upon the state of selfish isolation, the ending of life called death.

Verse 52. Again the Jews answer, calling what Jesus has now said as nonsense: that He must be getting His information from some evil spirit. Their evidence is that the Patriarch Abraham is dead, the prophets are dead. How is it that Jesus can claim that His words can keep someone from tasting death? What Jesus had said must be false - because Abraham and the prophets heard and kept God's word, and they died. Jesus was in effect calling Himself more powerful than all men of faith, and above all claiming to be greater than God by having the power to give eternal life.

Their misquote of a man never tasting death is incorrect. Christ Himself does "taste of death", even as every believer, but will not see the finality of death.

Verse 53. They accused Jesus of accounting Himself as greater than their father Abraham and the prophets, all of whom are dead. Who does He think He is?

Verse 54. Jesus says that He does not push Himself up as being so great - for that would be pride and self-will, therefore worthless. They claim God, and it is He that is His Father. He is the One that honors Jesus. The principle of obedience they have stated concerning Abraham and the prophets is exactly what Jesus shows as what His whole mission is in obedience to the will of the Father who the Son knows absolutely. Jesus questions them as to how they can claim that they have an exclusive connection with

Lesson XVI continued

Him.

Verse 55. They have had the teaching of the Law and of the prophets, and now the Son Himself stands before them and yet they cannot recognize Him. For Him to withhold His close connection with God would be a lie. To withhold the truth is just as bad as spreading a lie. He would then be like them. Jesus has no choice but to honor and follow the mission of the Father.

Verse 56. "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it and was glad." This is the eternal answer to the Jews asking Jesus if He claimed to be greater than their father Abraham.

The truth is that Abraham with his closeness to God eagerly desired to see the coming of the Messiah - he rejoiced to be given a vision of that day and was glad. Jesus tells them that He was the One Abraham had looked for. These men claim to be children of Abraham, but they claim Jesus is doing dishonor to Abraham in the power He claims to have.

It has been suggested that in the offering up of Isaac, and immediately thereafter, Abraham was given special insight into the fuller meaning of the promises then renewed - a vision of the day of Messiah. According to Jewish tradition, Abraham saw the history of his descendents in the mysterious vision recorded in Genesis 15:8. Thus he is said to have "rejoiced with the joy of the Law."

Verse 57. The Jews, still persisting in the materialistic understanding of the words, therefore said, that Jesus being less than fifty years old could not possibly have seen Abraham. Again they misquote Jesus. Jesus said Abraham had seen His day, not that Jesus had seen Abraham, in Jesus' present form.

Verse 58. This verse finally and completely seals the whole point Jesus has been trying to get across to these people.

Again prefaced by the solemn verily, verily - Jesus states that before Abraham was born, Jesus was and continues to be. Abraham was created in the temporal world of time and matter. Jesus was eternal and has life within Himself, which He grants to the believer unto eternity.

Verse 59. The claim Jesus has just made goes way above and beyond any ideas these people had read or heard concerning the Messiah. This was so unexpected and beyond their human understanding, that they considered it completely outrageous. It cannot be allowed to stand. Their solution is to get rid of Jesus by stoning Him to death. What He said they considered blasphemy. They may have gotten stones outside and returned. By that time, Jesus gathered His cloak about Him and passed through the general crowd so that by the time they came back to the original place, Jesus had already passed by them. Some have thought that Jesus became invisible and passed right by them. Such a supernatural

Lesson XVI continued

explanation, if not required to explain the event, should be considered unnecessary.

Chapter 9:1-12. The Man Born Blind.

"1 And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth.

2 And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?

3 Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

4 I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

6 When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,

7 and said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Silo'am, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.

8 The neighbors therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged?

9 Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said, I am he.

10 Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened?

11 He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Silo'am, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight.

12 Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not."

This chapter begins abruptly, considered to be connected with the Feast of Dedication (as is mentioned in chapter 10:22-39).

The Sign - Verses 1-12.

The chapter begins abruptly, not concerned about the particular time and place. It has been suggested that it took place connected with the Feast of Dedication. This is from the mention of the feast in chapter 10:22. The story of the healing is described in vivid detail. The differing opinions of the people and the term "the man called Jesus", all together, give strong indication that this was recorded by an eyewitness.

Verse 1. The blind man was probably sitting in the vicinity of the Temple, begging for gifts from those going to or coming from the Temple. As Jesus was passing by, something about the man got His attention. Apparently, this man was well-known as having been blind since birth.

Verse 2. This inspired His disciples to ask Jesus the source of this man's condition. The popular tradition attributed any

Lesson XVI continued

catastrophic serious illness as a result of God's judgment on that person's sin. This man's condition, however, calls that into question. They also considered religious privileges as inherited. They also apparently assumed it was caused by the man himself, in some former state of existence, or something done by his parents, before his birth. They readily assumed that the suffering was punishment of guilt. The only question was whose guilt.

Verse 3. Jesus' answer only deals with this specific case. The origin or causes which have influenced or determined the condition or circumstances of men are not the central concern. What is most important is what action we take to remedy what is wrong. Evil is an opportunity for the revealing of acts of God.

Jesus' answer is that neither the man or his parents did anything that brought this down on him. In this particular case, the man was born blind that the redemptive work of God's love through Jesus might be shown to the world. This was done openly to make everyone see the grace and mercy as well as the divine power of God in an act of Mercy.

Verse 4. Jesus goes on to say that He and His disciples must do the works of the Father who sent the Son. The day is the time for labor. There would be an end when night came - the death of Christ. Then no man can work. The end of day is certain and inevitable, even if the day is temporary.

Verse 5. Christ is the light of the world. Whensoever Jesus manifested revelations of the Word of God throughout the history of God's dealing with man, during His incarnation and through the following ages of the Church. The light is unchangeable in essential character, even though the revelation may vary with differing occasions. This light goes further than simple human vision, but to the inner soul and spirit.

Verse 6. After Jesus finished teaching about His being the light of the world, He turned to the man born blind. By the time He would have gotten the active attention of the blind man, Jesus spat on the ground, mixing it with dirt, making a kind of clay paste. He covered the blind man's eyes with the clay. It is obvious that this procedure in and of itself could not have any medical means of restoring sight to one born blind. Jews believed at that time that spittle had some virtue of curing diseases of the eye, but always also used some kind of charm. Jesus may have done this as a way of refuting this superstitious belief. This would show them that Jesus would work in His own way even if the means seemed contrary to what the outcome was to be.

Verse 7. He then told the man to go to the pool of Siloam and wash away what Jesus put upon his eyes. Certainly this was a test of the man's faith and someone there was readily willing to lead him there.

Lesson XVI continued

The pool was well-known, fed by a fountain by the same name, under the wall of Jerusalem, towards the east, between the city and the brook Kidron. Some consider this an allusion to a type of Shiloh, the sent of God, because the name Siloam means "the sent". Others consider this a reference to Christ as the water from the rock during the time of Moses.

The story ends with the man obeying Christ. He went to the pool, washed, and came back healed from his blindness.

Praise God's mercy that such an incurable condition was within His power to heal.

Verses 8,9. It appears from the context that he went home. Some of his neighbors saw him and recognized that he was the man who begged - that he had been blind. They had seen him often near the Temple. That he was now seeing led some to say that he was like him, while others said it was the same guy. He heard these comments and said, "I am he."

Verse 10. The obvious question comes next - How is it that now he can see?

Verse 11. The man explained the details - about Jesus, the clay, washing in the pool of Siloam, and his sight received.

Verse 12. The group asked him where Jesus was, but he didn't know.

The response to this miracle begins in the next verse when the neighbors took the man to the Pharisees, to judge the miracle.

Lesson XVII

John 9:8-41.

"8 The neighbors therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged?

9 Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said, I am he.

10 Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened?

11 He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Silo'am, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight.

12 Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not.

13 ¶ They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind.

14 And it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes.

15 Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see.

16 Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them.

17 They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a prophet.

18 ¶ But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight.

19 And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see?

20 His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind:

21 but by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself.

22 These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.

23 Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him.

24 ¶ Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner.

25 He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.

26 Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes?

27 He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples?

28 Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples.

29 We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is.

30 The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvelous

Lesson XVII continued

thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes.

31 Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.

32 Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.

33 If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.

34 They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out.

35 ¶ Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God?

36 He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?

37 And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee.

38 And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.

39 And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.

40 And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also?

41 Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth."

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The results of Jesus healing the man born blind takes up the rest of this chapter.

Verse 8. Some of the man's neighbors saw him walking and seeing, while he was on his way home. They remarked to each other that they knew him as the blind beggar.

Verse 9. Others said it was him. Some said that he looks something like him. The man himself, aware of their speculation, settles the question by stating, "I am he."

Verse 10. The inquisitors asked "How" this had happened. The fact of his healing was not as important as the manner of it, to the curious.

Verse 11. His answer included that the man called Jesus had made clay, put it on his eyes and told him to wash in the pool of Siloam. He went, washed, and received sight. The man had learned Jesus' Name, but was not aware that He was the Christ. Many reports of His activities had been voiced about.

Verse 12. The group asks the man to tell them where He is. They apparently wanted to seize Jesus to take to the Sanhedrin, to accuse Him of violating the Sabbath by healing this man. The man did not know where Jesus was at that moment.

Lesson XVII continued

Verse 13. They did the next best thing by taking the healed man to the Pharisees. They were the recognized judges on religious questions. He was most likely taken to one of the two smaller courts or Synagogue Councils. Later, the group would be referred to as the Jews.

Verse 14. Here we are formally told that the healing took place on the Sabbath. That Jesus made clay and healed the man were the points of offence to these Jews.

Verse 15. The Pharisees, not content with second hand reports, question the man himself. How had he received his sight? The man again describes what Jesus did, and what he himself did. His answer is shorter than previously. The making of the clay and the command to go to the pool of Siloam are left out. A little impatience seems to be coming upon the former blind man.

Verse 16. In reaction to the man's witness, some said Jesus was not of God for not observing the strict laws of the Sabbath. These legalists could draw no other conclusion. Others thought that only a person with authority from God could do such a miracle, and He had therefore the right to do God's work on a Sabbath.

This division was the two ways the group judged the fact of the healing. One laid stress on the act itself. The other judged the fact according to their preconceived opinion.

Verse 17. Hoping to get some additional information from the former blind man, they ask what his opinion is concerning Jesus. At this point, they seem to accept the fact that Jesus opened the man's eyes. The former blind man said that Jesus was a prophet. They seem to have been hoping that the man's answer would give them an excuse to put him out of the synagogue as a worthless witness, or more ammunition against Jesus.

In answering that Jesus must be a prophet, the man wisely sidesteps their intent. According to a Jewish teaching, a prophet could legally dispense with the observation of the Sabbath. If they accepted Jesus as a prophet - then He would be without guilt in that case. If not, they have to explain the miracle in some other way than by the power of God. The healing was such a good thing, that they couldn't attempt to claim that satan or his agents had anything to do with it.

Verse 18. The Jews in desperation now try to make out the man as a liar - that he had not even been blind to start with. To gain witnesses to that effect, someone had the bright idea to bring the man's parents in.

Verse 19. When the parents were brought in, the Jews wanted to know if the man was their son, if he was born blind, and how it is he now sees.



Lesson XVII continued

Verse 20. In their answer, they admit to what they are responsible for - this is their son, and he was born blind.

Verse 21. On the third part of the question, they claim no knowledge or responsibility. They then point out to the questioners that their son is an adult, and can therefore answer for himself. To be considered a mature man among the Jews, he had to be at least 30 years old.

Verse 22. His parents were very careful of their answers. It must have already been generally known that the Jews here planned to put anyone out of the synagogue if they confessed that Jesus was the Christ. This meant that they could not participate in any religious connection with those who worshipped God.

Verse 23. Whatever the parents thought of this miracle and about Jesus, they were afraid to say, so they put the responsibility back on their mature son.

Verse 24. They called the man again and told him to give God the praise but added that they considered Jesus a sinner, therefore not a prophet, but one who broke God's laws concerning the Sabbath. This really put the man in a bad spot. If he gave the praise to God, he would also be agreeing to their denigration of Jesus.

Verse 25. The man wisely bypasses their attempt to make him in effect denounce Jesus. He simply and sincerely speaks of what he knows - he was blind, now he sees.

Verse 26. The Jews ask him to retell how Jesus had healed him. Were they seeking for some flaw in the man's testimony, or were they sincerely looking for evidence that they might believe? The answer is shown in the following verses.

Verse 27. The man is obviously losing patience with them asking for the same information he has already given. He answers them that they must not have been listening when he told them earlier. Then he asks them why they want to hear it all over again. Then he asks if their motive is to also become disciples of Jesus. Of course, the man is in effect taunting them, remembering that they had already judged Jesus a sinner. By his saying this, he wished to put an end to any further questioning.

Verse 28. Instead of questioning him further, they spoke harshly to him. The word used to describe their words derives from 2 words - word, and spear. The thought is that the words are spoken like the piercing of a blade. They reveal the most harmful intentions of the speaker. Today we still use the term 'cutting someone down' or 'a cutting remark'. They then call the man one of Jesus' disciples.

Lesson XVII continued

We now imagine them puffing themselves up to say that they are disciples of Moses, true Pharisees.

Verse 29. They have the greatest evidence that God spoke to Moses. "as for this fellow" they have no idea where he is coming from, where he gets his authority from. They don't even mention the name of Jesus, as having no standing compared to Moses.

Verse 30. God obviously gave the former blind man a great dose of courage and wisdom, for he now proceeds to mock their reasonings and teach them the unquestionable truth that they should have easily recognized.

The man expresses amazement that the Man gave him his sight, and they can't grasp or admit where this power of healing came from. They act like they cannot decide - these professed authorities on religious matters. The case was plain for all to see.

Verse 31. He now gives evidence. God does not listen to the prayers of sinners or heathens. He listens to those who worship Him and try to do His will. This was commonly accepted doctrine.

Verse 32. It is nowhere previously recorded in Scripture that anyone ever opened the eyes of one born blind.

Verse 33. It is obvious that whoever performs such an unprecedented miracle must be of God, for only God is the source of all things good. Without the power of God, man can do nothing.

Verse 34. Now the group of Jews condemn the man and his parents, that their sins and his led to the punishment of his being born blind. He was not worthy to even be in their presence. They are equally beside themselves that such a wretch has attempted to teach the most educated and wise people that they are. They can not permit this odious person to remain in or return to the synagogue. They excommunicated him. They forced him to leave and forbade him to return.

They had no reason or argument to disagree truthfully with what the man had said. They were so dumbfounded that they could see no other recourse than to get rid of him. This was their only way to silence him, since they could not refute his plain and true testimony. "And they cast him out."

Verse 35. In the following 6 verses, Jesus describes the new Society based on acceptance of a new truth - belief in Him. He includes a test of this new fellowship.

Jesus heard about what had happened to the healed man, that the Pharisees had finally cast him out. When He found the man, Jesus asked him if he believed in the Son of God. Now that the man has received his outward sight, and had borne a courageous testimony before those religious leaders, does he recognize the

Lesson XVII continued

Son of God?

Verse 36. His eager answer - if he knew who He is, he will believe on Him.

Verse 37. Jesus tells the man that he has seen Him, with the sight granted unto him, and he is talking with Him at that very moment. It is as if Jesus told him that the Son of God is not far off and in some remote place, but is right in front of him talking to him now.

Verse 38. The healed one immediately responds in word and deed, that he does believe, calling Jesus Lord and worshipping Him.

Verse 39. Jesus used this occasion to reveal the distinction between the old ways and the new. Those that the religious leaders rejected as worthless and trouble makers, are the ones that see the Truth in Jesus. Those who thought they could see the truth of God were unable to see it, being blind to it.

Judgment came in the reactions of people to the presence and ministry of Jesus. They all had to make a choice. Those who have sight and don't use it may become blind, no longer having the power of sight.

Verse 40. There were still some Pharisees with Jesus and questioned Jesus if they were blind also. They apparently understood that Jesus was talking of blindness in a spiritual sense. That they had the benefits of education and training in religious matters also includes responsibility. So these men will be without excuse if they do not act on their claimed spiritual sight.

Verse 41. Jesus explains that if they were blind, nothing could be held against them for not recognizing the spiritual truth in front of them. But if they claim that they see, and still reject Him as the Messiah, then their sin remains with them.

There are several thought-provoking issues raised in the story of the man born blind. Using the idea of sight, Jesus explains the paradox of people who claim they see (know and understand the things of God) are actually blind to God's Truth in Him and His message and works. Others considered ignorant and of no value (or blind) to those who claim sight, are the ones who are able to see (understand and have faith in) the spiritual Truth in the love and power and compassion of the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Lesson XVIII

John 10:1-18. Christ is the Door and the Good Shepherd.

"1 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

2 But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

4 And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.

5 And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers.

6 This parable spake Jesus unto them; but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.

7 ¶ Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

8 All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.

9 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

12 But he that is a hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth; and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.

13 The hireling fleeth, because he is a hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

14 I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

15 As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

17 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

18 No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."

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The relationship between the Shepherd and the sheep reflects the relationship of Jesus to His Church.

Verse 1. Jesus begins teaching about the forming of the Church using the example of a shepherd and his relationship and responsibility for his flock.

Lesson XVIII continued

From Old Testament times, the Word of God was considered the 'Door' into God's care. Jesus here speaks of Himself as the door. 'Verily, verily' again emphasizes the profound importance of this lesson. Anyone who bypassed the door to get in the sheepfold is a thief - seeking to steal. He follows his own sneaking way to get what he wants for himself only.

Verse 2. The shepherd of the sheep entered in the door of the fold wherein his sheep were kept.

Verse 3. The porter was the guard to whose care the fold was entrusted. This is explained as the Holy Spirit acting through appointed ministers of each fold.

When the shepherd comes for his flock, the porter recognizes him and opens the door, that the shepherd may take his sheep to pasture. He knows each one of his sheep, calls them by name, and leads them out. They follow him because they recognize his voice. When the shepherd "putteth forth" all his own, he goes in front of them and leads them.

It has been suggested by some that this parable applies to a good minister of the Gospel in each part of the shepherd's care for the sheep.

Verse 5. The sheep will not follow a stranger but will run from him. They do not recognize his voice. The stranger seeks to lead them astray, to draw them away from their true shepherd. But since the stranger also speaks differently (strange doctrine) they will turn from him.

Verse 6. The men who heard this proverb did not understand the spiritual meaning of the fold, the porter, the door, the sheep and the shepherd.

In verses 7-10, Jesus interprets the parable in relation to Himself.

Verse 7. With emphasis (verily, verily) He calls Himself the door of the sheep. He is therefore the one giving admission to the sheep into the fold. Only through Jesus may a believer enter the church.

Verse 8. Before Jesus many false Messiahs and self-proclaimed prophets came to fulfill their own selfish ends. They may have been inspired to fulfill the expectations of the nation to revolt and win freedom from oppression.

Those who sincerely looked for the true consolation of Israel were not lead astray by these imposters.

Verse 9. Once a man enters, he is assured of his salvation, and feels safe, and has the freedom to also go into the world and find pasture. He retains his salvation and uses his gifts to bear fruit for Jesus in the world.

Lesson XVIII continued

Verse 10. Some will come for their own personal gain or glory, but in effect will attempt to steal, kill and destroy the faith of others. They, not having faith in Jesus themselves, will take that of others to destroy them for their own ends.

On the opposite side, Jesus comes to give life, and that life is eternal. He also brings with that life abundance. He will maintain and strengthen and extend that life. In abundance we are granted grace, mercy, forgiveness, love, peace, and joy. All these things are God's gifts to us through Jesus, both now and forever. Our lives should be filled with giving thanks.

Verse 11. The Good Shepherd. Jesus is not only the True Shepherd but also the good shepherd. He is not only good inwardly but also in the fulfillment of His work. The second part suggests what the Shepherd is prepared to do for the sheep. He is prepared to lay down His life for the sheep, paying the price for their redemption.

Verse 12. On the other hand, the hireling does his work for pay and therefore has no personal relationship with the sheep. When he sees approaching danger (in the form of a wolf), he chooses his own safety rather than the good of the sheep. This leaves the sheep open to the attack of their natural enemy. Some of the sheep are suddenly and violently attacked and caught. The rest of the flock is scattered.

Verse 13. The false shepherd shows cowardice by fleeing. He shall also be responsible for any damage done to the flock by wild beasts. His only concern was his own safety, not for the sheep.

Verses 14-15. Jesus is the Good Shepherd, and knows and is known of his sheep. The Father knows Jesus and Jesus knows the Father. The relationship of Jesus to His people mirrors that of the Father to the Son. Jesus took our nature that afterwards we may receive His. This bond includes sympathy and love. The Good Shepherd is prepared to do what is necessary to save the lives of the sheep.

Verse 16. Jesus reveals that His sacrifice on the Cross is not only for those of the fold of Israel, but there are other sheep, not grouped in folds as the Jewish nation was. They were scattered abroad, among the Gentile nations. No matter where, they were still Christ's sheep, and they shall hear and recognize His voice. There becomes one flock (not one fold). All are equally related to One Lord (the Good Shepherd), Jesus.

Verse 17. The reason for Jesus' Father to love Him is because He willingly lays down His life for His flock. By this act He rises to a more glorified life by bringing those saved by His sacrifice with Him. Thus the love of the Father is again manifested to those who accept His Son.

Lesson XVIII continued

Verse 18. The eternal counsel planned Christ's mission. It was nonetheless only fulfilled by the free will of Jesus as the Incarnate Son. He chose to follow the will of the Father. No man ever in reality had the power over Him to change His decision. Jesus had the authority to give up His life, still perfectly following the Father's will. He also had the authority to take His life back again. In His divine nature, Jesus had the right to life. This was also by the Father's will, so that Jesus is the Resurrection. Not just the Father, but "My Father" is the source of Jesus' willing sacrifice and the source of eternal life.

Verses 19-30.

"19 ¶ There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings.

20 And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him?

21 Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?

22 ¶ And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter.

23 And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch.

24 Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.

25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

26 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

28 and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

30 I and my Father are one."

Verse 19. The Jews again could not agree on all these sayings and deep teachings that Jesus was telling them.

Verse 20. Rather than giving credence to Jesus' words and acknowledging Him as the Son of God, they went to the other extreme. The Jews claimed that He was out of His mind, and that He was saying things that were lies coming from some demon. If that was the case, they had no reason to even listen to Him.

Verse 21. Others were on the side of Jesus, and questioned whether a devil could open the eyes of the blind. Certainly only God could do so. So also the words Jesus spoke were of God, showing the love and care of God, nothing an evil spirit could utter.

Lesson XVIII continued

In verses 22-30, Jesus gives His final testimony concerning Himself before His Passion.

Verse 22. The mention of the feast of dedication seems to connect with the subject of the Lord's teaching concerning national deliverance. Several deliverances are celebrated and a prayer for another follows. It was also called the "Feast of Lights". The fact that it was winter suggests the reason for the following verse.

Verse 23. This verse describes Jesus walking under the shelter of Solomon's porch in the Temple.

Verse 24. As Jesus walked, a group of Jews came around Him, resolved to get a final answer to their questions. Their uncertainty drove them to ask for a direct answer to whether He was the Christ or not. Even if He was not exactly what they expected or wanted, they wanted the question finally settled.

Verse 25. Rather than answering directly, Jesus directs them to remember that He has been telling them the words of God, and He has been doing the works of God. Through all this they had not believed Him. If they could not clearly understand the true spiritual import of His words, they should have been convinced by His works. The works bear witness that only God could be the source.

Verse 26. Jesus refers back to His previous teaching about the sheep and the Good Shepherd. The fault of their unbelief is not due to any lack of witness or evidence, but because they do not have the power to understand it. They do not have the power because they are not among His sheep.

Verses 27-30. Jesus describes those that do believe. They recognize His voice and accept His offer of eternal life with absolute security.

Verse 27. Three statements 1. My sheep hear My voice; 2. I know them; 3. No one shall take them out of my hand.

Jesus is explaining the positive response of those who have listened to His words. He thereby establishes the reasons that the Pharisees are not of His sheep. They listen but do not hear the spiritual truth. They make a choice not to accept who Jesus is, and therefore choose not to follow Him.

Verse 28. Jesus lays down the principle of eternal life. He gives them Himself, for in Him is eternal life, the gift of the Father in His Son. The Holy Spirit lives in their hearts, continuing to reveal the blessings of Jesus. Eternal life abides in them. To say that anyone has the power to forcibly take one of His sheep out of His hand, is to deny the Word of God and the



Lesson XVIII continued

divine power of Jesus Himself. It is more foolish, as some have suggested, that the one in Jesus' hand can somehow pluck themselves out of His hand. Once you are a sheep, you cannot turn yourself into a goat. To suggest this is to claim power greater than that of Christ and His Heavenly Father, creator of all that is.

The following verse completes the thought.

Verse 29. God, the Father, is greater than all. He is the most powerful. All the joined energy of men and satan and his demons cannot change or prevent the perfect will of God coming to pass. What He has decreed, He has the power to fulfill. The Father is behind all that Jesus does and therefore unchangeable, certain, and absolutely and eternally the truth.

Verse 30. I and the Father are one in essence, not in one person. God is the Father of all mankind, and Jesus could also claim this as far as His human nature is concerned. But to say that they are one including all the attributes, and the operations of those attributes of the Godhead, means equal to the Most High. If these things were not true, then the Jews would be right in judging Jesus as a blasphemer. If they are true, they should have worshipped Him. We know the outcome, for in the next verse they take up stones to kill Him.

One God in Three Persons  
Like a family with individual members.

Lesson XIX

John 10:31-42. Stoning Prevented.

"31 ¶ Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.

32 Jesus answered them, Many good works have I showed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?

33 The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.

34 Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods

35 If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken;

36 say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?

37 If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.

38 But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works; that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.

39 ¶ Therefore they sought again to take him; but he escaped out of their hand,

40 and went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode.

41 And many resorted unto him and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true.

42 And many believed on him there."

Verse 31. After Jesus claimed He was One with God, the Jews again took up stones to kill Him.

Verse 32. Jesus questioned them, directly asking which of His good works (attributable only to the power of God) they are going to stone Him for.

Verse 33. They reply that it was not for any work but for His calling Himself equal to God. This was blasphemy - punishable by death.

Verse 34. Jesus replied, "Is it not written in your Law, I said, ye are gods?" Jesus was suggesting that in the Old Testament in Psalms 82:6. The reference was to judges who violated the laws of their office yet their office was no less divine.

Verse 35. In other words, if those unto whom the word of God came were called gods. This meant that if a person received a direct divine call to a sacred office, brought with it a portion of the divine power that was appropriate to that office. This was the way God communicated with men and made His will known. All this was preparation for the union of God and man that Jesus came to complete. Jesus then states that the Old Testament Scripture cannot be broken. The Old Testament has permanent significance.

Lesson XIX continued

Verse 36. Those of the Old Testament dispensation had only that title for their temporary mission of the Word. In contrast now stands One whom the Father directly sanctified before them. How can they accuse Him of blasphemy? He was set apart for His mission, then sent into the world. They should understand that for Him to call Himself the Son of God was completely appropriate.

The main point of the verse in Psalms 82:6 is that a covenant between God and man indicates a personal relationship which brings with it the possibility of a vital union.

Verse 37. Jesus again appeals to His works. These Jews who always wanted to see a sign, so Jesus tells them to base their opinion on what they have seen. Can they not recognize the power of God in His works? They can't understand that such work can only be done by One who is of the Father, and does what God directs Him to do.

Verse 38. Jesus suggests that if they can't accept what He says, they can still see in His works the power of God flowing through Him. Thereby the Father is in Jesus and Jesus is in the closest communion with the Father. If they can only see the works for what they represent, they may go to the next step and believe.

Verse 39. Again these men tried to take Him by force, to seize Him. Again they are powerless to lay a hand on Him. He is under God's protection. He went forth out of their hands, because they had no power over Him. They could not snatch Him from the Father's hand.

Verse 40. Now having been rejected in Judea, Jesus goes back to the place where John the Baptist had begun baptizing. This is also the place that Jesus' own ministry had begun. He returns there as His ministry is about to close.

Verse 41. Many came out to see Him, saying that John the Baptist had performed no miracles or healings. On the other hand, all that John had said concerning Jesus had become a reality. They then had accepted Jesus as the coming One, the Messiah, doing the works that only He could do.

Verse 42. Many believed on Him, worshipping Him for Who He really is. The final word, 'there' reminds us that this took place not in Jerusalem, but at the place beyond Jordan.

John 11:1-36.

"1 Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.

2 (It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)

3 Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he

Lesson XIX continued

whom thou lovest is sick.

4 When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

5 ¶ Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.

6 When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.

7 Then after that saith he to his disciples, Let us go into Judea again.

8 His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?

9 Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.

10 But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.

11 These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.

12 Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.

13 Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.

14 Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.

15 And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him.

16 Then said Thomas, which is called Did'ymus, unto his fellow disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.

17 ¶ Then when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already.

18 Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off:

19 and many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.

20 Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat still in the house.

21 Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

22 But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.

23 Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.

24 Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

26 and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

27 She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.

28 ¶ And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee.

Lesson XIX continued

29 As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto him.

30 Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him.

31 The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there.

32 Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled,

34 and said, Where have ye laid him? They say unto him, Lord, come and see.

35 Jesus wept.

36 Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!"

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Chapter 11 begins with the narrative concerning the raising of Lazarus, four days after death, and the reaction to it.

Verse 1. This verse denotes an interruption to Jesus' work beyond Jordan. A message reached Him in Perea from Bethany. A message was sent to Jesus concerning Lazarus of Bethany, by his sisters Mary & Martha. He was sick and they wanted Jesus to come.

Verse 2. Mary is further identified as the one who anointed Jesus with ointment, and wiped His feet with her hair. It was her brother, Lazarus, who was ailing.

Verse 3. The sisters thought it enough to merely inform the Lord that one whom He loved was sick. No plea was voiced. They thought it sufficient to only inform Jesus of their need.

Verse 4. Jesus' reply was that this sickness was not for the purpose of death, but to show forth the glory of God, and that the Son might also be glorified thereby. Jesus' final glory would come in His Passion. The raising of Lazarus revealed Christ's real power and this pushed His enemies to a point of crises, which then led to His final glorifying in His resurrection and ascension.

Verse 5. Jesus loved these three people. He must have known them for some time and became very close to them.

Verse 6. When Jesus heard their message of concern, He waited for two days where He was. He obviously knew when the most advantageous time would be to go. The trip would last about one day. Lazarus must have died at the time the message came to Jesus. Jesus knew he was already dead. He would finish this work where He was before going back into Judea.

Lesson XIX continued

Verse 7. After the two days, Jesus told His disciples it was time to return into Judea again, the place of hostility against Him.

Verse 8. The disciples remind Jesus of the murderous hostility of the Jews who previously had tried to stone Him. Why would He take the chance?

Verse 9. Jesus replies that there is an appointed measure of working time. One can work that complete time. On the other hand, the time is limited and the work must be finished within that time. That time was restricted to daylight that the worker may not stumble.

Verse 10. Light is needed to work; if it was night, the man will stumble because they had no light within.

Verse 11. After Jesus said these things, He tells them that Lazarus has fallen asleep. He calls him "our friend," describing the relationship between Himself and His disciples. Jesus describes His going as a mission to wake him up out of his sleep.

Verse 12. The disciples misread this and reply that if Lazarus is sleeping, he must be getting better. That would make a journey there unnecessary, for the man was saved from death already.

Verse 13. Jesus was speaking of sleep as death, but the disciples thought He was talking about a restful sleep.

Verse 14. To clear up the misunderstanding, Jesus told them plainly that Lazarus was, in fact, dead.

Verse 15. Jesus says that He did not go sooner - because then death would not have taken place. For the disciples' sakes Jesus knows that raising Lazarus from the dead will be a much stronger influence on their faith. Dwell not on present sorrow but joy to come, we will go to him (Lazarus). This implies that Jesus plans to go to the man himself - not the weeping family - therefore hope is included in the plan.

Verse 16. Thomas suggests that they all go, since Jesus was going. He was also called Didymus (twin). Jesus had suggested they all go and Thomas says the disciples should accept the invitation and choose to go. That we may die with Lazarus, suggests that Thomas has not understood Jesus' words "That ye may believe". He thinks that since Lazarus was dead, they also might be walking into a situation where they could be killed by a hostile group of Jewish leaders. They all already knew the danger of going into Judea, and wished to show that they were willing to go with Jesus even if it meant they would be killed along with Him.

Lesson XIX continued

Verse 17. Lazarus had lain in his tomb already four days when Jesus arrived.

Verse 18. Bethany was about 2 miles from Jerusalem.

Verse 19. After death, seven days were observed for solemn mourning. Many Jews had come to bring comfort to Martha, and Mary, concerning the loss of their brother.

Verse 20. Watch had apparently been kept to know if and when Jesus came. The news was carried to Martha as soon as Jesus was seen. At once she went and met Him, while Mary was somewhere in the house and didn't learn of Jesus' arrival till later.

Verse 21. Martha expresses her faith that if Jesus had been there, her brother would not have died. This was not a complaint.

Verse 22. Though she may not grasp completely the true relationship of Jesus with the Father, she expresses her understanding of the special relation between them by saying "whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee."

Verse 23. Jesus tells her that her brother will rise again. That death leads to life. Death does not conquer, for resurrection is certain.

Verse 24. Martha acknowledges the resurrection at the end of the age, but without any effect in the present.

Verse 25. Jesus takes her statement and expands on her understanding about resurrection. He brings it to the present reality of the communication of life to each individual believer. The resurrection is part of that life. The communication begins with a relationship with Jesus. He is the resurrection and the life. Even death cannot break that relationship. To be in a relationship with an eternal life means partaking of that life, which death cannot sever.

He does not promise, or bring these things as gifts. He is that gift. Union with Jesus makes the believer partake of these things as they find their life in Jesus.

Verse 26. Here Jesus states the other condition - that whoever believes in Him shall never die. Union with Jesus is a spiritual reality, in the present which continues eternally. Jesus asks Martha if she believes this.

Verse 27. Martha accepts His words; she has believed. He is the Christ, the Son of God, the Promised One. Though she may not understand the implications of all He has just told her, she accepts every word He has said.

Lesson XIX continued

Verse 28. After this, she went home alone and called Mary, telling her that the Master had come and asked for her. Most likely Jesus had actually asked that Mary should come to Him.

Verse 29. When she was told, she got up immediately and went to Him.

Verse 30. This occurred outside of town where Martha had previously met Him. It appears that Jesus wanted to see them privately, away from any crowd of mourners or curiosity seekers.

Verse 31. Those who were at the house watched Mary get up quickly and leave. They assumed that she was going to the tomb to weep for her brother. Martha may have hoped to get Mary alone to come, but that was not to be.

Verse 32. When Mary arrived in Jesus' presence, she fell at His feet and said the same thing that Martha had said to Him: if Jesus had been there, her brother would not be dead.

Verse 33. The sadness of Mary, and of those who had also come following her, yet weeping, greatly saddened Jesus. He was troubled, and groaned in the spirit. He knew what He was there to do, but He also was moved by their sadness and the way they seemed to think that He had let them down by not coming sooner and preventing Lazarus' death.

Verse 34. Jesus asks where Lazarus was buried, so they led Him to the place. This is the only mention in this Gospel where Jesus seeks information.

Verse 35. The word used here occurs only here in the New Testament. It says in effect, "tears fell from Him." He was not weeping for Lazarus, because He was about to raise him. Most likely, He wept for the sorrow that Mary and Martha had endured because of His delay, and that their faith had not yet taken in the reality of His power over death, that when anyone accepted Him, His life entered into them, even though they experienced physical death.

Verse 36. The comforting Jews remarked that Jesus must be crying because of His love toward Lazarus, and the deep sorrow He felt at the loss. This was a most natural observation.

Next, the raising of Lazarus  
Beginning with John 11:37.



Lesson XX

John 11:37-57. At the Tomb of Lazarus.

"37 And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?

38 ¶ Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.

39 Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days.

40 Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?

41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.

42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

43 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

44 And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

45 ¶ Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.

46 But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done.

47 Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles.

48 If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him; and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.

49 And one of them, named Cai'aphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all,

50 nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.

51 And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation;

52 and not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.

53 Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death.

54 ¶ Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called E'phra-im, and there continued with his disciples.

55 ¶ And the Jews' Passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the Passover, to purify themselves.

56 Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?

57 Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a

Lesson XX continued

commandment, that, if any man knew where he were, he should show it, that they might take him."

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Jesus had been observed weeping. The Jews who were present had interpreted this as Jesus' love and sadness over the death of His friend Lazarus. But in the next verse, they voiced in a more general way that Jesus could have kept Lazarus alive.

Verse 37. They recount what had obviously become a widely known event - the restoring of sight to the blind man in Jerusalem. If He could do that, could He not also have prevented the death of this man?

Verse 38. Jesus again reacted inwardly with a groaning. Then He arrived at the tomb, a cave, with a stone laid against the opening.

Verse 39. Jesus asked that the stone be removed from the opening. Martha could not see any purpose in this request, and that Lazarus' body would be in a strong-smelling state of decomposition, having been dead for four days. As his sister, she does not wish to see or smell the decaying body of her beloved brother. According to Jewish tradition, after death the spirit wanders about the grave, hoping to return into the body, but when the face is changed, on the fourth day, it hovers no more but leaves the body alone.

Verse 40. Jesus points to the deeper meaning of His words - that if she would believe Him, and believe in Him, she will see the glory of God. His answer to her description of corruption is the glory of God. His whole point in delaying His coming to Bethany was so that a greater work than healing would be the most powerful way to show the glory of God. This by His raising their brother after he had been in the tomb for 4 days. This will prove beyond any doubt that God has given His power to even raise the dead.

Verse 41. The stone blocking the entrance to the tomb was moved out of the way. No matter what they thought, those present did what Jesus told them to.

Jesus then lifts up His eyes toward heaven, thanking the Father for hearing and answering His prayer (referring back to verse 4). This revealed the closest communion between the Father and the Son. Thus by gesture and words, Jesus was openly proclaiming this relationship so that all those present would be powerfully challenged to believe in Him, even those previously who had been against Him. Jesus' prayer may be observed as a voiced revelation of God's will, rather than a petition that required consideration. The best prayer we can offer is not connected with

Lesson XX continued

our selfish will, but with an understanding and desire for God's will to be done. This is centered around what is best for the individual, from God's point of view in each case.

Verse 42. This verse seems an aside, spoken to His disciples. He said the previous words for the benefit of the crowd (not specifically the Jews) that was present. By thanking God for His prayer, not yet revealed when the miracle was accomplished, there could then be no doubt but that Jesus was a true messenger from God, doing the will of the Father. This should leave the onlookers to the only conclusion - that Jesus was indeed in close communion with The Father and therefore that He was exactly who He claimed to be - the Christ.

Verse 43. After these words to the disciples, Jesus calls out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth." He wanted no doubt about what He said, and with what authority He said it. No mumbling incantations like sorcerers used. It also suggests that Lazarus was treated as if he had only been asleep, and Jesus was waking him up.

Verse 44. The man came out of the tomb, still wrapped up in the customary grave cloths, or bands of cloth. That he could walk suggests that the legs were wrapped separately, similar to the Egyptian custom. His face was still covered with a smaller piece of cloth, a napkin. Obviously everyone who was present was in shock at such an unexpected turn of events. Jesus had to bring them back to their senses, telling them to remove the burial coverings and the cloth around his face, and thereby free him, that he may move on his own.

Verse 45. Obviously a number of Jews had come to the funeral, in addition to all the friends and family of Martha and Mary. Whatever their reason, curiosity, concern, they were present and eyewitnesses of the words of Jesus and of the raising of Lazarus. Many of this group were convinced of His being the Messiah.

Verse 46. Another group chose not to believe, and saw their duty as going to the religious leaders and the Pharisees and report on what Jesus had done. Their motives are not clear. There is no suggestion of hostility against Jesus. They may simply be confused as to what all this meant, and sought guidance. Whatever their motive it was not of faith. It did however force the Jewish leaders to make a drastic decision.

Verse 47. The chief priests and the Pharisees got together in a council meeting to decide what to do as a result of this report about this undeniable miracle of Jesus.

The chiefs priests take the lead. They were Sadducees. They controlled the Sanhedrin. The words and works of Jesus are considered only as they affect their interests. This was a crisis

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and they must act quickly and decisively. To call Jesus "this man" is showing their contempt for Him.

Verse 48. Their main concern is that a great multitude will believe in Jesus, because of the miracle. They seem to think such an event will lead to an uprising with Jesus as their leader. Any such movement would be taken by the Romans as a revolt against them. The Sanhedrin were supposed to keep the populace under control, and if they couldn't, they would lose their position. They would even lose their control of Jerusalem and the Temple, and their own political power.

Verse 49. Caiaphas was high priest that year (not that the position changed annually). He spoke as the religious head of the nation. The Pharisees seem to him to be unable to make the necessary decision. He tells them they "know nothing at all". To him, the solution is both expedient and necessary.

Verse 50. What Caiaphas says is prophetic, though not in the way he intended, "That one man should die for the people." He was being practical. He was assuming that a majority of the people would claim Jesus for their king. He also assumes that Jesus would then raise an insurrection against the Romans, which the Romans would crush, destroying the Temple, the city, and the nation. To assume all this as inevitable went well beyond any evidence that had been reported concerning the words and works of Jesus. According to Caiaphas (and a proverb to the Jews) it was better to put Jesus to death than take any chance of the nation being put in jeopardy.

Verse 51. In virtue of his office as high priest, Caiaphas utters his own opinion, yet God guided his speaking as that he spoke a prophecy of the death of Jesus, and its purpose of saving people. This was neither understood by him, nor part of his intention.

Verse 52. At this crisis John points out that the Jews had ceased to be the chosen people, but were just a nation as all other nations were. The true people of God had been scattered throughout the world. He also includes those among the Gentiles that accept Jesus. All would be gathered together as children of God. Scattered abroad suggests the broken relationship of man toward his creator.

Verse 53. What had been suggested as one way to deal with Jesus, was now a settled plan, which was being discussed as to how this was to be accomplished. From this time, all had agreed to this action. A proper opportunity was to be sought to arrest Jesus.

Verse 54. Jesus knew the outcome of His miracle of raising

Lesson XX continued

Lazarus, that the Jewish leaders would have to react with extreme measures. He therefore went to a city about 20 miles north of Jerusalem called Ephraim. It was small and near the wilderness. This took Him away from the scrutiny of the Jewish leaders and their followers around Jerusalem and in Judea. He stayed there with His disciples about 2 months.

Verse 55. The Jewish Passover was about to be celebrated. Ritual purity was accepted as a requirement - though not as a specific law of Moses. Thus many went from the country to Jerusalem early to perform this rite.

Verse 56. The Jews expected Jesus to come to the festival. They talked among themselves in the temple as to whether they thought He would come, or if it was possible He would not come.

Verse 57. Word was passed around, coming from the chief priests and Pharisees, that if anyone knew where Jesus was, they must report immediately to them, so that they may take Him. This instruction was being talked about among the crowds, raising their curiosity of when or where Jesus may come to the festival. They were on the lookout, and they were required to tell the Jewish leaders as soon as He was seen. This was also part of the working of God's plan in our redemption.

This ends Chapter 11.

Chapter 12 begins with Jesus going back to Bethany to visit Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, 6 days before the Passover.

Lesson XXI

John 12:1-27.

"1 Then Jesus six days before the Passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.

2 There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.

3 Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment.

4 Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscar'i-ot, Simon's son, which should betray him,

5 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?

6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

7 Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.

8 For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.

9 ¶ Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.

10 But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death;

11 because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.

12 ¶ On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

13 took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.

14 And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written,

15 Fear not, daughter of Zion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt.

16 These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him.

17 The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record.

18 For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle.

19 The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him.

20 ¶ And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast:

21 the same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsai'da of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.

22 Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.

23 And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the

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Son of man should be glorified.

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

25 He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honor.

27 ¶ Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour."

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John closes his narration of the public ministry of Jesus with 3 typical scenes. One with the relationship of Jesus with His disciples. Another with the gathered multitude in Jerusalem. The third is related to the outside world. Behind all three is the darkness of unbelief. Finally, John summarizes the two judgments concerning the entire results of Christ's ministry.

Verse 1. Six days before the Passover, Jesus returns to Bethany to visit Lazarus, who He raised from the dead. Some have figured that the resulting feast was celebrated on the evening after the Sabbath, with Jesus' entering in Jerusalem on the next day, the Sunday.

Verse 2. Jesus is given a supper. Martha served, but Lazarus sat at the table with Jesus. From Matthew 26:6 and Mark 14:4 it appears that the meal was held in the house of "Simon the leper". Martha fulfilled her natural role in serving.

Verse 3. Mary, however, must have had an inner intuition from God about the coming sacrifice of Jesus during the Passover festival. The anointing was symbolic of a divine consecration to an appointed work for God. The other Gospels don't mention the name of the ointment. John records that it was a pound of spikenard, and very expensive. An act of devotion, she wiped His feet with her hair. The smell filled the entire house. The experience could only be that of an eyewitness of this circumstance. The other Gospels mention the pouring on the head (a mark of honor).

Verse 4. One of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, had a very revealing opinion of this event. It showed his unbelieving concern about the money involved. Mary shows honor to Jesus. Judas will selfishly, actually aid in Jesus' coming sacrifice.

Verse 5. Judas questions why this expensive ointment had not been sold for 300 pence, the money then given to the poor.

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Verse 6. This describes Judas' motive. He was the treasurer of the disciples and therefore took control of the bag containing the group's money. Since he was a thief, having control over their finances gave him the opportunity to pilfer from the disciples' resources with little chance of being found out.

Verse 7. Jesus responds to this with the words, "Let her alone." This affirms her act of devotion as one proper for the coming sacrifice and death of Jesus, even though Mary may not at the time fully understand the complete significance of her action. She has done her part in preparation, by keeping this ointment to this time. This anointing was the beginning of preparation for His burial. Some was used now, some saved for later, for His dead body.

Verse 8. Jesus states that there will always be poor people. However, He will not always be with them physically.

Verse 9. The word spread about Jesus being there, and many came. John calls them Jews, indicating that they were inhabitants of Jerusalem. They were curious, not just about Jesus, but also wishing to see Lazarus, who had reportedly been raised from the dead by Him. These were among the common people - not the leaders.

Verse 10. The chief priests consulted together, very disturbed by this miraculous event. It was leading many of the people to accept Jesus. Their solution was that Lazarus should also be killed.

Verse 11. The priests were losing control of their people, which they saw as a result of the raising of Lazarus. Rather than accepting the divine power of Jesus as God's Christ, they only saw a threat to their own positions.

Verse 12. The next day a great many people got the news that Jesus was coming to the feast in Jerusalem where they were already.

Verse 13. They took palm branches and went forth to meet Jesus as He entered the city. They called out, "Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord." They placed the branches on the road ahead of Jesus to make his ride more comfortable.

The cry of "Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord," is from Psalm 108. According to tradition, it was written as a dedication of the Second Temple. Included is reference to both the divine mission and the national one. He comes in the Name of the Lord; He is the King of Israel.

Verse 14. The other Gospels give the details about how Jesus got the donkey. John omits them (Matthew 21:2, Mark 11:2, Luke



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19:30). Jesus sat upon the young donkey and rode it into Jerusalem.

Verse 15. John then quotes Zechariah 9:9. For a king to do this would be a sign of humility. He was only separated from the crowd but in the most unpretentious way. Thus another Old Testament prophecy about Jesus comes to pass.

Verse 16. As this was taking place, the disciples did not understand the profound significance of the entrance into Jerusalem on the donkey. They got the message when Christ's ascension showed the true spiritual nature of His sovereignty. John did not mention the disciples' role in this event, but assumes that it is well-known.

Verse 17. A group of people along the path to Jerusalem had also been with Jesus when He called Lazarus out of his grave, raising him from the dead. They were now bearing witness to this miracle to all those around them. They described as it had occurred - the calling forth, then Lazarus coming out alive.

Verse 18. Many people who heard their testimony wanted to see Jesus - the One who had performed the miracle. At the least, they were simply curious. At the most they may have come to believe in Jesus, since He was the only one in all history to raise someone from the dead - a work only possible with God's power.

Verse 19. The Pharisees, observing all this excitement and uproar concerning Jesus, seem to want to blame someone for their allowing this to happen. The 'ye' is assumed to refer to the religious leaders who had counseled among themselves how they were planning to get rid of Jesus. They had not succeeded in doing anything against Him.

Their description of what they have seen is that the world is gone after Him. Whatever power or influence these leaders thought they had is gone away from them. This was a major crisis for them.

Verse 20. Among those who made the journey up to Jerusalem for the Passover were some Greeks. They would be called proselytes or those of the Gentiles that wished to convert to the worship of the Jewish nation.

Verse 21. Apparently, Philip was known to them, being an inhabitant of Bethsaida of Galilee. They ask him most respectfully to introduce them to Jesus.

Verse 22. Philip seeks further advice about this request of Gentiles to meet the Lord. He tells Andrew. Then they go to Jesus and tell Him, together.

Verse 23. Jesus replies to them by stating that the hour is

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come and that the Son of man should be glorified. Jesus was saying this to the Greeks as well as all others present. He was about to make the ultimate sacrifice for all men. It also included the resurrection, as victory over death as the representative of humanity.

Verse 24. What Jesus announces in the previous verse He illustrates in the four following verses: life triumphs over death; glory comes from sacrifice. He came to lay down His life in order to take it up again.

He begins with a lesson from nature - saying, This is the utmost truth: a corn of wheat which holds the seed, the potential of new growth, has to be separated from its previous part in the wheat plant. Whether a sowing or a falling to the ground, it being alone dies. But it contains the seed which when germinated brings forth a new plant which will produce much fruit.

Jesus is comparing Himself to a grain of wheat. He must die to be glorified, if glorified only then can He bring forth His church. This was the only way of Redemption in the order of God. His death made possible the fruit of redeemed mankind. Even though we cannot fully comprehend the mystery of the apparently dead grain bringing forth new life, and fruit yet we observe its happening.

Just so, we cannot fully comprehend the fact that the death of Jesus, still containing the germ or quickening power of God's Spirit, could glorify His body and that this power was beyond counting in its value, for the salvation of uncounted souls of men. Life eternal begetting life eternal. An appropriate illustration of the bringing forth of fruit, 30, 60, 100 fold and more.

Verse 25. How the example in Verse 24 relates to human life is here presented. Sin and selfishness only lead to destruction of life. ON the other side, sacrifice, the surrender of self makes possible that death opens up the certain potential of eternal life. He who loves his life and spends his time gathering all that the perishable world offers, will perish with it. But he who works for things eternal, not enticed by the world, prepares for life beyond this world.

Verse 26. What was previously said is now applied to His disciples. To serve Jesus, one must follow Him. Following Him means progressive growth, and staying in close relationship with Him. This emphasizes that those who would be a Christian just follow a list of rules or traditions to earn the name are missing the whole thing. Christianity is a personal relationship with Jesus. Where Jesus is, so shall His servant be. The Father shall honor that one. Anyone means not just Jews, but from any nation. The Father of the Son becomes also the Father of the believer.

Verse 27. Jesus now turns to His personal role in what He has

Lesson XXI continued

told His audience. In His humanness He was experiencing deep emotions. He has felt a sudden and unexpected fear of His coming violent death. It would be completely natural to cry out, Father save me from this death - that there must be another way. But He knew that beyond any human feelings or personal desire was the whole purpose of His coming to earth. All the preparations, all the work of His ministry, all the promises of Salvation have led to this time - very near the hour of His crucifixion. The Father's will must be done.

Thank God Jesus was willing to do what no one else could ever do.  
Amen.

Lesson XXII

John 12:28-38.

"28 Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

29 The people therefore that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him.

30 Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.

31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

33 This he said, signifying what death he should die.

34 The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?

35 Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.

36 While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light.

¶ These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them.

37 But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him:

38 that the saying of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?"

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Verse 28. Jesus acknowledges that His mission is to glorify the Father and He asks the Father to glorify Himself through the Son.

A voice from heaven says that the Father has both glorified it, and will glorify it again. This is a voice of assurance. The Father has glorified His name throughout the ministry of Jesus, at Christ's baptism, and the Transfiguration, which showed the blessed Sonship of Jesus. These also revealed the true character of the Father.

To glorify it again was to be shown by the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus, and subsequently the proclamation of the Gospel throughout the world.

Verse 29. Whatever the form of the voice of God, it was clear to Jesus, but those that stood nearby weren't sure what they heard. Some said thunder, some said it must be an angel that spoke. They could tell it was spoken words, though they could not hear them clearly enough to understand them.

Verse 30. Jesus does not tell them what the voice said, only that the voice was for their benefit. It was to test or strengthen

Lesson XXII continued

their faith - especially as related to the seeking Greeks. It was a crisis! The voice approved of their request to meet Jesus.

Verse 31. The Passion of Christ would judge man's thoughts and actions toward Jesus, which in turn showed the true position of the majority of the men towards God. The world includes Jews and Greeks - especially because of their idolatry.

The prince of the world, satan, has been in control of the world, except the nation of Israel. Now he is about to be cast out of his normal region of control.

The judgment of the nation of Israel was for their rejection of Jesus.

The judgment against satan would end the prevalence of idolatry among nations - thereby breaking its stranglehold of the Gentiles.

Verse 32. When Jesus said He would be lifted up from the earth, He was describing His death on the cross. He was also describing this as the offering of Himself as the Savior who would thereby draw all men unto Him. The church is centered in each believer's relationship to Jesus.

Verse 33. This refers to the nature of Christ's atoning death.

Verse 34. The people were confused by this - that He would be lifted up. They thought He was planning to leave. They did not understand Jesus calling Himself the Son of man was part of His being the Messiah. They thought He should call Himself the Son of David, and that He was supposed to reign on earth and was to remain for ever. They claimed that this they had learned from being taught from the Old Testament scriptures. The Son of man was not a familiar term to them, nor that He should be lifted up.

Verse 34. Realizing their lack of understanding and perception, thus their confusion, Jesus makes a suggestion. Rather than trying to deal with these various opinions all at once, Jesus proposes a much better way for them to arrive at the truth. He will be with them for yet a little while. During this time, they should follow Him as a light in a world of darkness. This will keep them from becoming lost in the darkness, not knowing where they were going. By walking with Jesus they had a chance to accept the light and make progress in following it. Otherwise, darkness will overtake them and they will not know where they are going, lost in a dying world.

Verse 36. This finishes the teaching of the light. While He is still with them, they can receive the benefits of that light - one being the belief in the light - thereby they can be counted among children of the light. He calls them to act - and makes a promise of what the choice will bring to them. To become children

Lesson XXII continued

means partaking of the living light of Jesus and thereby having light within them.

After this teaching, Jesus left the crowd at the Temple and went to an undisclosed location to spend the night. This would be His most vulnerable time - in the dark without any onlookers, they would finally arrest Him. But His time was not yet.

Verse 37. All the miracles and teaching were done before them, yet the majority chose not to believe. Because those had been done before their eyes, they had no excuse; they were eyewitnesses, yet they denied the truth.

Verse 38. Here John connects the prophecies of Isaiah to this circumstance (Isaiah 53:1). Jesus had delivered the message of God in two ways: first the message of the servant of God who came to offer forgiveness and reconciliation with God; second the signs of the power of God in healing and other miracles. One spoke to the heart, the others were seen and experienced by the senses.

The words of Isaiah question why both these messages failed - who has believed, who has seen God's power?

John 12:39-50.

"39 Therefore they could not believe, because that Isaiah said again,

40 He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

41 These things said Isaiah, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

42 Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:

43 for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

44 ¶ Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me.

45 And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me.

46 I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

47 And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.

48 He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

49 For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.

50 And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak."

Lesson XXII continued

Verse 39. The cause of this unbelief is also prophesied by Isaiah. The people in general were already in unbelief - not seeking God, not serving God, not glorifying God. And they should have been known as God's chosen people. Both when Isaiah preached and when Jesus was revealed, the people were hardened in their unbelief by the working of God so that their true condition was without question. Therefore when they were punished, it was just, and also served to fulfill the prophecies concerning those who would not put their faith in Christ.

Verse 40. Is. 6:9. Once on the path of unrighteousness, people grow in their ability to disregard any messages from their conscience. It becomes therefore much harder to hear much less obey any moral path. The divine 'cannot' expresses an internal and moral impossibility. It does not suggest an external force causes their condition. God foresaw the condition of their unbelief and told Isaiah to prophesy concerning this generation that would reject Jesus.

Verse 41. Isaiah was given a vision of Christ's glory, and of Him, he spoke. He was speaking to his contemporaries, but also speaking of the time when Christ's glory would be revealed to the world.

Verse 42. Nevertheless, even among the members of the Sanhedrin, many believed on Him. Only Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathaea have been recorded. To confess their belief would cause them to be put out of the synagogue. (See chapter 9:22.) This would remove them from any part of the religious traditions of the nation. They would lose any position or influence they had enjoyed.

Verse 43. These men were more seriously concerned with what others thought of them, than what God thought of them. Peer pressure - wanting to be accepted and praised by their peers becomes the central driving force and focus of their thinking and actions. No room is left for anything or anyone else, especially the call of Christ.

Verse 44. Verses 44-50 appear to be a summary of the Lord's teaching during this time of crisis. Jesus expresses His self-sacrifice as in complete contrast to His enemies and their selfishness. He teaches what His Father commanded Him to. His testimony was given in a manner that demanded attention, once and for all. Through Jesus, any who believe on Him are in reality believing in Him that sent Jesus, the source of the special revelation of Christ.

Verse 45. To observe Jesus is to learn about He that sent Him. This was an essential part of His mission to reveal the love of God to men.

Lesson XXII continued

Verse 46. His mission was to bring the light of truth to the world. Darkness permeates the world of men. Without Jesus, the darkness remains. With Him, vision becomes pure and leads to understanding and faith in Jesus who illuminates the purpose of His coming - to redeem mankind from the darkness of sin.

Verse 47. The power of His words is expressed, then the reaction. Some will listen but then choose not to accept their truth. Jesus does not judge that person. His purpose is to make the offer of salvation. The listener, still lost in sin, chooses his own condemnation by not accepting Jesus.

Verse 48. Those that reject His words do not cancel their power. They shall remain as witness and accuser of those that rejected them as they rejected Jesus. At the final judgment, these words will judge them.

Verse 49. The message of Jesus was directly from the Father. From the Living Word to the Spoken Word, Jesus said what the Father gave Him commandment to speak. Jesus makes no claim to being the source of these messages.

Verse 50. Jesus knows absolutely and without question that the Word of God contains spirit and it imparts life everlasting. God's commandment not only quickens and supports life. It is the expression of the Absolute Truth of all creation and the purpose of God in it. Not it shall be life, but it is eternal life, now and forever.

His teaching to the public now is ended. From here on in John's Gospel, Jesus continues to reveal Himself to His disciples. (Chapters 13-17.)



Lesson XXIII

John 13:1-30.

"1 Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

2 And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscar'i-ot, Simon's son, to betray him;

3 Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;

4 he riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.

5 After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.

6 Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?

7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

8 Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

9 Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.

10 Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.

11 For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

12 ¶ So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

13 Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.

14 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

16 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

17 If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

18 I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.

19 Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he.

20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

21 ¶ When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.

22 Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he

Lesson XXIII continued

spake.

23 Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved.

24 Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake.

25 He then lying on Jesus' breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it?

26 Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscar'i-ot, the son of Simon.

27 And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.

28 Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him.

29 For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor.

30 He then, having received the sop, went immediately out; and it was night."

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Jesus further reveals Himself to His disciples. First the final ministry of love (chapters 13-17). This is described in verses 1-20. Then in verses 20-30, we are told of the traitor. The general understanding of the order of the meal and the revealing of Judas as the traitor is: Judas was present at the distribution of the bread, but left before the passing of the cup. The other Gospels contain more details about the Passover Meal and the institution of the Last Supper Communion.

Verse 1. Jesus is keenly aware of His near Passion and death. The following events took place before the feast of the final Passover. This gave occasion to Christ's display of love for His disciples. The repetition of the word 'world' suggests that Jesus was thinking of the trials that they would have to experience once He was gone. Until His hour has arrived, His enemies are without power. When the hour arrives, He recognizes its coming. That is when He must leave as part of God's plan. For Christ, to depart meant changing His mode of existence, going back to the Father. The world is understood as transitory, and unsatisfying.

Jesus loved His own with a perfect, unselfish love. At this point, just before His death, He shows them the true extent of His love for them, 'to the uttermost'.

Verse 2. At the end of the Passover meal, John mentions that the devil had put into Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, the plan to betray Jesus to the Jewish leaders.

Verse 3. Jesus already knew this was to happen, that it was part of the Father's plan. Jesus knew from whence He came and where He was going. Everything was within His control. Even though

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betrayal and death were ahead, yet Jesus sees through these to the Resurrection and Ascension.

Verse 4. This work of service by Jesus, is not recorded as to the exact time or in what relation as to the point in the meal it took place. The importance of the act is paramount. Jesus arose from the table, removed His upper garments, and tied a towel around His waist. Every detail is recorded as only an eyewitness could. Jesus arose from the group, and prepared Himself to wash His disciples' feet. He poured the water into a basin, then began washing their feet and wiping them with the towel. Jesus was slowly and perfectly performing the usual servant's duty.

Ezekiel 16:9. Rabbi's commentary said "Among men, the slave washes his master; but with God it is not so."

Verse 6. Some commentators have suggested that Jesus started with Peter, therefore it would be more natural that Peter would question what Jesus wanted to do. It really is not essential in what order the foot washing took place. I can imagine Peter not feeling comfortable, no matter when Jesus came to Him. He felt it was unnatural that his Master should perform the function of a servant or slave.

Verse 7. Jesus answered that He was doing something that He wanted Peter to remember later. Even though Peter did not understand its purpose in the present, it was a lesson Jesus wanted him to experience. The lesson Jesus knew as absolute and complete had to be learned by His disciples by slow experience. That perfect knowledge of the disciples did not begin until the day of Pentecost.

Verse 8. Peter responds that nothing ever could change his position in relation to Jesus. Jesus would always be his Master. He expresses the idea forcefully as the judgment of his own will. In this, Peter thinks he knows what the future holds and impetuously says 'never'.

Jesus answers Peter in a way to show Peter that he has forgotten the first rule of discipleship: That is self-surrender - complete submission to Jesus, not self-will. Peter must accept this service even if he doesn't understand its true and full meaning now. Without Peter's submission, he will have no part with Jesus.

Verse 9. Again Peter injects his own opinion. Jesus had shown the service as washing the feet. Now Peter wants to tell Jesus how he wanted to be washed, extending the action to every part. It is possible that Peter got the idea that this cleansing had also a spiritual meaning, thus suggesting that he could be completely cleansed by Jesus washing his hands and head.

Verse 10. Jesus points out to Peter that they all have

Lesson XXIII continued

bathed, as is customary before sitting down to the Passover meal. But in walking from the place of bathing, one would naturally get some dust or dirt on their feet. To be completely clean then, it would only be necessary to wash the feet.

It has been suggested that this would be a lesson about a Christian, while living in this world, would continually pick up some dirt or dust, and need to repeatedly wash. This suggests the continual sinning of each Christian which needs continual cleansing - by asking for forgiveness through Jesus - thereby being completely clean.

When Jesus finished the washing, He pronounced them clean, but not all. Obviously an outward rite could not purify a person's soul.

Verse 11. John explains that Jesus knew that Judas was planning to betray Him, and he therefore was not clean.

Verse 12. After Jesus was finished, He redressed as before and again sat down at the table. He then asked them if they understood the purpose of what He had done to them. They were to think about it. Then Jesus began to explain His purpose.

Verse 13. That they call Him Master and Lord is correct.

Verse 14. If Jesus so far above them washed their feet, then they were obligated to perform the same service for each other. A duty of subjection and service with a special view to mutual cleansing.

Verse 15. Jesus gave them an example to follow - a form of self-sacrifice, "that as I did to you, ye do also." The custom of "feet-washing" has been continued in various forms in the Church from that time to this. In our day, it has been all but forgotten.

Verse 16. Verily again emphasized a new teaching. One that is sent is not greater than the sender, nor the servant than his master.

Verse 17. To know and understand the lesson of the foot-washing then to perform it brings joy.

Verse 18. Again Jesus mentions that one among them will betray Him. He has chosen the 12, but one of them is false. This was no surprise to Jesus. The betrayal was a prophecy that must be fulfilled. This one in fact had eaten bread from Jesus' hand, meaning a close and intimate friend. To lift up the heel strongly suggests brute violence.

Verse 19. Until now, Jesus had kept this sorrow in secret, but now it was essential that the apostles are made aware that Jesus already knew of this - that He was not taken by surprise

Lesson XXIII continued

(thereby they could not trust in Jesus absolutely). His foreknowledge and control of the situation was all part of God's plan. All would add more evidence that He is truly God's Son, performing God's will.

Verse 20. Jesus emphasizes that whoever accepts the message of His disciples, is effectually accepting Jesus, and in accepting Jesus, they effectually are accepting God the Father as the source of everything. This was said to reassure them that the singular act of Judas would not in any way diminish their role in the spreading of the Gospel. Service is based on love. In working for only the benefit of one's self we find a turning away from giving unto treachery.

Verse 21. After saying these things, Jesus was disturbed in spirit - feeling the emotion of the coming spiritual rejection, and betrayal, and condemnation. He very seriously again tells them that one among the group was to betray Him.

Verse 22. The apostles wonderingly looked at each other, not knowing of whom Jesus had spoken.

Verse 23. Close to Jesus, leaning on his chest was John, the beloved disciple.

Verse 24. Peter signals to John to ask Jesus who it was that Jesus was talking about.

Verse 25. John leans closer and asks Jesus who it is.

Verse 26. Jesus answered that it is the one to whom He will give a sop, when He had dipped it. This was usually considered a special honor, offered by the host to especially honor one of His guests. When He had done this, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, son of Simon.

Verse 27. The accepting of the sop as a confirmation of Judas' purpose. Whatever misgivings Judas may have had were now cancelled, giving himself over to satan's control. Jesus then told him to go ahead with the plan, and do it quickly.

Verse 28,29. None of the other apostles at the table knew the true intent of Jesus' words. Some thought that since Judas held the bag of money, Jesus had indicated that Judas go and buy the things they would soon need for the Passover, or perhaps to donate something to the poor.

Verse 30. Once Judas received the sop, he immediately went out. By this time, night had fallen and it was dark. It was into darkness that Judas went. The other apostles were left in the light of the Lord and His discourses to them in the Upper Room.

Lesson XXIV

John 13:31-35.

"31 ¶ Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him.

32 If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.

33 Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me; and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.

34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

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Once Judas was gone, the one element of evil was gone. It was used by God as part of the fulfillment of Jesus' death. Jesus accepted Judas' role as the willful self-seeking one, the complete antithesis of the spirit of Jesus. This was the point when no going back or stopping what was about to happen, was possible.

The use of the term 'the Son of man' shows the relationship of Jesus in His human nature to God.

The perfect self-sacrifice of the Lamb of God would bring about the victory over death. This was the source of God being glorified. In historic time, this was yet future, yet is considered as accomplished in relation to the spiritual order. Once set in motion, the Passion of Christ was considered completed because this was the path which God planned and which He also had the authority and power to carry out in every single detail.

Verse 32. The self-sacrifice of Jesus will bring glory to God; God would then glorify the Son, by taking Christ's glorified humanity to Heaven for eternal fellowship with Him. This also included Christ's glory in the Cross, the resurrection and the Ascension. Each was necessarily part of the other.

Verse 33. Though Jesus was talking about the climax of His mission and how it would affect Him, He now turns to His disciples. He now describes how these events will affect them. It was time for Him to let them know that He was about to depart - that they could not come with Him, or follow after Him. The words "little children" convey deep affection and an understanding that they were yet immature. At the same time, it included kinship and loving sympathy - that they are in a similar relationship with Him as He is to the Father.

There is but a small amount of time left. After the separation they would miss His presence, but they must know it is coming and be prepared to continue in His word and His commission.

Verse 34. The new commandment was to love one another as He had loved them - that was the manner in which that love was to be

Lesson XXIV continued

shown. Spiritual growth was necessary. Jesus speaks as their Master and as a Father who gives instructions to those He is to soon leave. The life of Jesus was the pattern to follow. The serving, the giving, the self-sacrifice, revealed the perfect way those who were followers of Jesus should act toward their brethren and this should also extend to all of humanity.

Jesus was the life of the Church - shown not by a duty imposed, or rituals to be practiced, but by the inner power of self-sacrifice. This takes the place of the whole law - in a positive and absolute sense - superceding the negative (thou shalt not) and relative commandments.

That Jesus says 'as I have loved you' indicates that His mission among them is complete. He has set the example they are to follow.

Verse 35. The actions of love among Christians would be the main sign of those who were followers of Jesus. This would witness to the love each believer accepts in accepting Jesus as Savior, and therefore shares with his brethren God's love that wells up within. The river of living water that Christ promised continues to flow.

Unfortunately the history of the Christian church is full of divisions and splits and rivalries. If only we humans could consistently follow this commandment of our Savior - the one He emphasized and repeated - the simplest to say and also the most difficult to follow. In order for it to happen, we must continually put ourselves second, put others and their well-being first.

Never can this be done in our own power. Only if we considered how much love flows to us from the Father and the Son do we have love overflowing - it must be shared - because it cannot be contained - jar of water example. What is continually poured in overflows. The more love we receive, the more we have to share.

Verse 36. Peter again represents the concerns of the disciples, as he questions Jesus about what He has said about His leaving them. This certainly caused concern about what they were to do, and how they could possibly go on without Him.

Jesus replies that Peter cannot follow Him now but that he would follow Him at a later time. Peter is focused on the temporal rather than the spiritual aspect of Christ's departure. Peter expresses the desire to go with Jesus. In His reply, Jesus encourages Peter by assuring him that he would follow Him - but now was not his time - he had a mission to fulfill first.

Verse 37. Peter assumes that it was a dangerous action that Jesus was to undertake, but that he was prepared to face whatever would come. He even goes so far as to claim he would die for Jesus. Such bravado is based on ignorance as events prove. Jesus was going to lay down His life for Peter.

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Verse 38. Jesus must bring Peter face to face with reality - when tested, confused and fearful, Peter will deny Jesus three times before the crowing of the rooster that next morning. That Jesus told him this in advance, when it came to pass - Peter would be severely humbled in his heart and soul, and realize the true divinity of Jesus.

John 14:1-12. The Promise of Heaven.

"1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

8 ¶ Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?

10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

11 Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

12 ¶ Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father."

Jesus explains the purpose of His going away. He will return to the dwelling place of the Father and prepare a place for them - then come again to receive them.

Verse 1. To give the disciples confidence after the disturbing previous discourse, Jesus opens their minds to think about in faith, what He is about to do for them. He tells them not to be troubled in their hearts. As they believe in God, so they should believe in Him as He has revealed the love of the Father to them.

Verse 2. As the earthly temple included many chambers, so the dwelling place of the Father included many rooms - enough for all



Lesson XXIV continued

the redeemed. The word translated 'mansions' means resting-places or stations on a main road where travelers were given rest and refreshment. This would include the thought of rest and progressing.

Jesus has recently told them of the coming sorrows. Now He reveals the great promise that His going would bring. He emphasizes that He does and always will tell them the truth. By His death, Resurrection, and Ascension, He will in fact open heaven to His redeemed ones, and a place will be prepared for them.

Verse 3. And if by departing, is the return certain. The present manner of fellowship will end, but make way for the eternal union. It is emphasized that the believer will be received personally (whether at the time of death or the Rapture). Also emphasized is the believer being in the glorified presence of Christ, when we also shall have a glorified nature as His.

Verse 4. Where He is going, the disciples know, and the way also. Whatever amount of the details of this that they understood at this time, they at least knew that He was returning to the Father. How this was to take place they could not imagine.

Verse 5. Questions arise, first by Thomas (5-7). Then Philip (8-11).

"How know we the way?" They cannot conceive of the presence of the Father, the throne of God, so how could they possibly imagine how to get there. The way is the only part man can get a grip on, and that is only through Jesus.

Verse 6. Jesus replies that He is the Way. To know Him is to know the Truth, and to participate in Him is life. He is our guide, our strength, and our source of introduction to the Father. Only He has the power and authority and commission to bring anyone unto the Father.

When Jesus says, "I am", He describes Himself as the way - not just one who knows the way or reveals the way.

The Truth sums up all the eternal principles and absolute law about God and His creation.

The Life includes a continuous being - following the divine will of God, which we may be a part of through Christ.

Only through Jesus can we understand God as the Father and thereby approach Him, in Spirit and in truth.

Verse 7. If they had understood the successive revelations of Jesus concerning His close relationship with the Father, they would have come to realize what the Father is truly like. As the disciples go forward, they must realize that Jesus was essentially revealing the Father in His purpose to save men.

Verse 8. Thomas is silent as Philip questions Jesus, asking

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Him to show them the Father. He is asking for normal vision of the Father, rather than the spiritual nature of what Jesus was speaking of. This question implies that Philip thinks that Jesus could actually show them. Then they would be content.

Verse 9. Jesus asks Philip if the length of time He has been with them has not been enough for them to have been aware that His words and actions were from the Father directly - that He displayed His holiness, justice, and love. In directly calling Philip by name, Jesus expresses disappointment with him, who had from the first followed Him. Philip should have by this time recognized in Jesus the fulfillment of the promises of God. So why is he now asking to see in the flesh, He who is spirit?

Verse 10. Christ has been teaching them that everything He did was in closest communion with the Father - His words are from the Father, His work was the Father working through Him.

Both the words and works of Jesus are the proof of His close union with the Father - the message was of God's will for man through the sacrifice of Jesus - the works showed the power and authority Jesus had been given.

Verse 11. Jesus tells His followers to believe what He tells them about His relationship with the Father. If that isn't enough, then believe Him because of their witnessing mighty works - which could only be done with the authority and power of God.

Verse 12. That Jesus goes to the Father means that through those that believe in Him will be able to do even greater works than He had done through His intercession. This will bring more glory to the Father in the Son.

As Jesus had repeatedly pointed to His works as a ground of belief He now emphasizes that true believers will do the same works. He is pointing to the powerful effects of their preaching after Pentecost. There is no indication that Jesus means works of greater miracles of a physical nature. These works remain works of Jesus through those who believe in Him. That Jesus goes to heaven increases their power, through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Lesson XXV

John 14:13-21. In My Name.

"13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

14 If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

15 ¶ If ye love me, keep my commandments.

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

17 even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

18 ¶ I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

19 Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.

20 At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."

Here for the first time Jesus uses the term - "In My Name". Whatsoever you ask in His name, He will do to bring glory to the Father. Henceforth Jesus emphasizes - the Holy Spirit will be sent in His name. He said, "ask the father in my name."

The phrase means, "as being in closest fellowship with me therefore the praying and asking must conform to the will of God in Christ.

Verse 14. To ask in Jesus' name means to ask consistent to the Will of Jesus in each case - His will being consistent to Salvation - the spreading of the Gospel and showing love to the brethren. He promises that He Himself will do what they ask. We can pray to Christ as well as praying in His name.

Verse 15. After Jesus leaves them, He continues to work for His disciples by providing a constant Advocate or Comforter. How well this will benefit them depends on how they maintain fellowship with Him through loving obedience. To accept Jesus as Savior includes a heartfelt recognition of the great mercy and love that has been given to all those who believe in the willing sacrifice Jesus made. The only result could be thankfulness, peace, and joy. But above all, the natural reaction to such love is to love in return. Jesus' most important commandment is to love one another as He has loved us. That is the greatest expression of our love for Him.

Verse 16. The Comforter will be assigned to each one individually as their own to begin in the present but to continue forever. The true divinity of the Paraclete is seen in that His coming can be equated with Christ also coming. The Spirit will be

Lesson XXV continued

with them as well as in them. The way that Jesus will be with all believers until the end of the age will be fulfilled through the Spirit.

Verse 17. The truth is communicated to man by the Holy Spirit (as opposed to the spirit of error). The world cannot perceive this Spirit because it is not attuned to it. The world depends on the senses, especially the sight of the eyes. Anything beyond this is unthinkable. To the disciples, the personal presence of the Spirit brought knowledge, strength in faith, and the potential to further growth. The Spirit is with them and is in them. The Spirit was in Jesus - then the Christ is with us in the Spirit. He abideth with the Church, and in the individual believer.

Verse 18. Jesus leaves no orphans - He will not leave them without comfort. He will continue to come to us. This began at the Resurrection and was fulfilled at Pentecost, the beginning and surety of the Church, which will be consummated at Jesus' Second Coming.

Verse 19. To the end of Christ's earthly ministry, the world will see Him even when they don't believe in Him. The disciples will continue to see Him because of their spiritual connection and recognition of His divinity, confirmed by His resurrection and those appearances that followed. Their fellowship with Christ continues through the continued revelation of the Spirit from Pentecost onward. Yet only the first evidence or down payment of life eternal.

Verse 20. This event will convince them that Jesus is in His Father and that fellowship is reflected in Jesus' relationship with His followers. The risen Christ continues in close union with His Father, and we in Him, as well as He in us. This is first true spiritually, but will one day also be true in history, and complete, into eternity.

Verse 21. Any person that has possession of Christ's words, clearly understood, should also work toward their fulfillment, in their own life.

In verse 15, active obedience is described as the consequence of the love Christ has given every believer. Here it is the outward sign of the inward presence of that love. The believer will experience the love of the Father through Jesus. This is the mission of the Spirit - to bring forth a closer revelation of the Majesty and love of Jesus than was possible under the conditions of earthly life. Yet it will be Jesus directing the Spirit in that He will manifest Himself to the believer through the Spirit. Jesus promises to show Himself and His love to us.

Verses 22-31.

Lesson XXV continued

"22 Judas saith unto him, not Iscar'i-ot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?

23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

24 He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

25 ¶ These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.

26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

28 Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.

29 And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.

30 Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.

31 But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence."

Verse 22. Judas ("not Iscariot" is needed to identify this man as not the traitor) questions Jesus as to why He is not showing Himself publicly as Messiah. The disciples were expecting Jesus to reveal Himself to the world. Judas seems to think that something must have changed Jesus' mind now that He plans to reveal Himself to the disciples only. If God so loved the world and it was Messiah's inheritance, why this change?

Verse 23. In answering, Jesus explains the necessary conditions for any person to perceive and receive a divine revelation. Those conditions included the response and obedience to Christ's love - a love returned to Jesus. This brings His Father's love to the believer, a relationship, a fellowship, which gives the experience of God to man. Knowledge, understanding, love, and obedience are equal and integrally related. Knowledge and understanding are based upon the Gospel Message (Christ's words). Using the word "We" shows Jesus' divine equality with His Father.

Abode describes that our faith lives with God, and God lives with us at the same time. This goes beyond the experience of God within us through the Spirit, and extends to our conscienceness that God is working with us and all around us in all aspects of our lives.

Verse 24. Because the world had no love, there was no way for the world to recognize Christ's offer of love. To reject Christ's

Lesson XXV continued

message is also to reject the Father's offer of forgiveness and reconciliation by God's mercy and grace. Shown for all time in the ministry of His Son. 'Which ye hear' emphasizes that the disciples have received the complete message of God's Salvation through Jesus.

Verses 25-26. All the things that Jesus had spoken on this evening would be added to by the coming Comforter who would bring all things to their memory. The temporary and physical connection with Christ will be followed by spiritual fellowship with them later. The Spiritual Advocate, the Holy Ghost, will be sent in Jesus' Name. He will teach and remind the disciples of everything Jesus had said and done. Thus the Spirit could more gradually reveal the whole of Christ's mission, so their understanding could completely realize that fulfillment of the work of Jesus in all its prophesied detail.

As Jesus' ministry was to reveal the love of the Father toward man, so the ministry of the Holy Spirit was to reveal to man the complete significance of Christ and His mission as Savior to bring those who would believe into a new and permanent relationship with the Father through His sacrifice. Only here does John use the two words together - the Holy Ghost. The moral aspect of the Spirit in guiding the life of the church is added to the teaching of the Truth of Christ. The title also occurs in the other Gospels.

Part of the job of the Spirit is guiding the Apostles into the correct understanding of the truth of Christ's ministry and sacrifice - so that their Gospels could be recorded in truth. This ministry was not limited only to them but did begin with them. The Spirit continues His work within us even now.

Verse 27. Though peace was a common greeting at that time among the Israelites, here it is a solemn farewell, including the thought of blessing. Jesus is leaving, but leaves peace behind with them. This points to the confidence of faith in fellowship with God. His death would secure that peace for them. It is contrasted with the gifts the world gives - those that initially give pleasure but are quickly consumed. This peace Jesus gives will grow and increase in power and blessing - giving conviction and strength to put aside any personal uncertainties or threatening of outward opposition or danger. The opening words of the chapter are repeated with much more force - they now have no reason to be worried or afraid.

Verses 28-31. That Jesus was going to Heaven, would bring about a more powerful fulfillment of His work because His fellowship with His Father would be perfect. This resulted especially from His sacrifice that paid the penalty of sin - the ultimate proof of the love and obedience of the Son as part of God's plan to turn the world upside-down.

Lesson XXV continued

Verse 28. Jesus reminds the disciples that He had previously told them that He was going away - then come again to them.

Jesus tells them that if they had not been so concerned about their own welfare, but to have been more concerned about His mission and its successful completion, they would now be rejoicing.

There will be sorrow at the separation, but joy at the result. They should be happy about His reunion with the Father, who is greater than He. By His exaltation, He would be in the best possible place to better help them spread His Gospel.

Verse 29. Their faith is about to be put to the utmost testing. Jesus has told them in advance, so that when these things come to pass, they will understand that they did not take Him by surprise. These things were not only foreknown, but also part of God's plan. The purpose was to solidify and make certain their faith unto eternity.

Verse 30. From this point, Jesus will not be talking with them, for those influenced by satan were now on the way to arrest Him. Satan's intent is worked out in the actions of these men. That satan has nothing in Jesus, emphasizes that there is no sin that satan can accuse Jesus of. Jesus chooses to go to the cross.

Verse 31. But to fulfill The Father's commandment so Jesus shows His love for the Father in obedience, that the world may witness the extent that Jesus obeys and loves the Father. Thus also is the love of the Father shown unto men - as the sacrifice of the unblemished and innocent Lamb of God pays the price of our redemption, the only way God can be reconciled with men. This was the overcoming of the dominion of death and the devil.

Arise, let us go hence (also in Matthew 26:46) signals that the eleven with Jesus left the house and began the journey to Gethsemane.

It is assumed that the following talks (chapters 15-17) were given on the way - before crossing the Kidron (chapter 18).

Lesson XXVI

John 15:1-17. The True Vine.

"1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

5 I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing.

6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

9 As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

12 ¶ This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

17 These things I command you, that ye love one another."

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Jesus illustrates the union between the believers and Himself, then it is developed in the different ways this will be seen in life, both in joy and sorrow. This begins with the vine, the branches, the husbandman, the dressing.

Verse 1. The vine had been used as a type of the nation of Israel. Jesus uses the image as representing Himself as the true vine that in Him the branches have life which gives them potential for growth and bearing forth of fruit. Israel had not lived up to



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the spiritual truths embodied in the symbol.

The relationship between the vine and the branches now became symbolic of that relationship of Jesus to His church. The husbandman is the Father, standing apart from both Jesus and His church.

Verse 2. Every branch in me He tends carefully. If it bears no fruit, He removes it. If any bears fruit, He prunes it. Union with Israel was the Old Testament condition of life; in the New Testament, it was the union with Jesus. To purge is to cleanse - in effect remove anything that distracts or diverts the vital power of the vine from the production of fruit.

Verse 3. Jesus describes the disciples as clean already because of the word, the complete revelation that Jesus had given them - He was not only the source, but also the finisher of their faith.

Verse 4. The endurance of their purity depended on their constant and continuous relationship with Jesus. The abiding is not a choice to be made in the future, but a present command. It is a choice of the believer nevertheless. The mutual fellowship is essential. As the branch cannot produce its own life energy, only as the branch abides in the vine does it bear fruit. So also the disciples cannot bear fruit of themselves - only can they bear fruit as they abide in Christ in a vital relationship.

Verse 5. Jesus sums up and clearly relates the true meaning of vine and branches. Jesus is the vine, the disciples are the branches - they will bear much fruit as they abide in Him, and He in them. To be separated from Him breaks the flow of life, making it impossible for them (the branches) to do anything.

Verse 6. Jesus describes a branch that begins united with the vine, but does not bear fruit, only leaves. Apparently the branch chooses to not take new life (Jesus) into itself to bear fruit, then it is cut from the vine, withers, and is finally burned up in a fire.

This suggests that a believer who begins a union with Jesus, but does not grow and mature, to bear fruit, but rather continues to be selfish and sinful, is thereby useless to spread the Gospel and show unselfish love to the brethren, will be taken from this world through death, still saved, but as if by fire, having nothing to show for their Christian life.

Verse 7. On the other hand, if a branch continues in vital union with the vine - as a believer abides in Jesus and His Words, then their prayers as in union with the will of God - through Jesus then what they ask will be granted - as Christ's teaching is formed into a request - coinciding with the will of Christ - it

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shall be done.

The fulfillment of prayers is certain insomuch as they correspond with the Divine Will.

Verse 8. God's intent in granting prayer requests is that 'ye may bear much fruit - thereby bringing glory to God through the living union of the believer and His Son. In this way those apostles show their following of Jesus and His words. To claim to be a follower of Jesus, one should be able to point to their bearing of fruit - the evidence of his union with Jesus through the Holy Spirit as a branch receives life from the vine.

Verse 9. The condition of the union is the same as that of the Father with the Son, a union of love, perfect love. So has Jesus loved us. He asks or commands us to continue in His love. It depends on our choice. The love is of the kind and nature the Lord showed us in His sacrifice for our salvation: unselfish, and wanting the best for us a reuniting with the Father, adoption as His Children, all for our sakes. In this is the atmosphere of His love.

Verse 10. Obedience and love are equally part of each other. One assures the other. The purpose and power of Jesus is part of the obedience of the disciples, being the acting out of their love for Him. In this way, only do they experience the joy of Christ's love for them and share their love for Him.

The perfect example of this relationship of love and obedience is described as Jesus' relationship with the Father - that by keeping His Father's commands, He abides in His love. It suggests that this relationship was the same before Jesus' incarnation and will continue after it. This relationship is the same yesterday, today, and forever. To abide in God's love is the highest possible good a man can devote his life to. In turn, he will be a good example of what all Christians could be.

Verse 11. True joy comes from the self-sacrifice of love. This is the joy of Jesus because it comes from His love. Jesus therefore tells the disciples that they will experience this joy, His joy, by continuing in His love. In this way, they may share the blessedness which is a part of His work, which they are to follow, wherein their joy will be full.

The joy of complete self-surrendering love Jesus showed to them was to be their example, and guide, even though it was to be accomplished through suffering.

Verse 12. This sums up all other commandments that had been given - that the believers love one another according to the example set by Jesus - even unto giving up their lives for one another.

Verse 13. The greatest ideal of love is shown by the extent

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that love is ready to even give up (or lay down) one's life for another.

The spirit and purpose of divine love is that sacrifice for those loved by Jesus, spoken of as "friends" here.

Verse 14. From the general description in the previous verse, Jesus brings it back to Himself. He calls His disciples His friends, but with a condition, of what is required from them. They must do that which He instructs them to do. The commands of Jesus have the aim of maintaining the bonds of love and unity between Himself and those that follow Him.

Verse 15. The relationship between the believer and Jesus is love rather than service. It is not just a job, as an employee obeys his boss. That had been the relationship of God to His people under the Law - Master to servant. The disciples nevertheless called themselves His servants - out of love and devotion toward Him, not from necessity, or obligations, but of choice.

The master tells his servant what to do but has no interest or obligation to share his thoughts or purpose with the servant. The servant does the task whether he understands his master's purpose or not.

Jesus has now called His disciples His friends, as He has shared with them "all things" - that His Father has given to Him to reveal the Father's will. He had shown them the love of God in action and then also in teaching. This part of the revelation is here complete. There was more to be revealed in the sacrificial death, and resurrection. This would be the work of the Holy Spirit afterward to bring them understanding a little at a time, until the whole Gospel story was complete - and finally written down to form the New Testament.

Verse 16. All that had taken place with the disciples was not their choice. It was divine grace, divine love, that Jesus chose them as His friends - the foundation of His Church. This is historic fact. They were called and ordained (or appointed and sent) for a special work. They are to go forth into the world, and the result will be productive and lasting, as fruit sustains life. Thus the church will be established and will continue to increase. The life and strength of the disciples will be maintained by their abiding in Christ, as the branch abides in the vine - a close union, continuous and everlasting.

It is the perfect will of God that His Gospel will be spread throughout the world. The result of constant faith is fruitful obedience. Prayer is a major part of that fruitful obedience. Though all these words are spoken personally to the disciples, they also would be applicable to all those who followed in discipleship throughout the times since then.

"Whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father" expresses a new

Lesson XXVI continued

connection having been revealed by His Only-begotten Son (in my name). Previously Jesus said that He could do the fulfillment of prayer (14:13,14), here it is expressed as, "that He may give it you." The great blessing is expressed as the certainty that the prayer of the believer will bring him all that will enable him to accomplish the Lord's work through him.

Verse 17. Jesus again (as in verse 12) commands the believer to love the brethren. This must reflect the love which Christ has given them, which revealed the great love of the Father in sending Jesus to save them from their sins, so that they can be born into the family of God and enjoy that love, and peace, and joy with Him, both now and forever more.

Lesson XXVII

John 15:18-27. The World's Reaction.

"18 ¶ If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

22 If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin.

23 He that hateth me hateth my Father also.

24 If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.

25 But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:

27 and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning."

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Verse 17 states the main observable relationship of followers of Jesus: the love they act upon toward each other. This sets the most obvious difference between those that are Christ's and those that are not. That these love Jesus and the brethren brings upon them the hatred of the world.

Verse 18. Jesus reminds them that He has already been rejected and hated by the majority of the Jewish people - that when they personally begin to experience the degree of that hatred, they should remember the example He had set. If they are true to Christ, they will experience what He experienced.

Verse 19. The disciples were truly chosen to come out of the world to follow Jesus. That they would be hated by that world would become the greatest testimony that they were truly followers of the Christ. If they obeyed the values of the world, they would be loved and accepted by the world. The measure of the world centered in the principle of supreme selfishness, the ultimate virtue expected of and insisted upon by the world, therefore the world no longer accepts them as its own.

Verse 20. Jesus reminds them of an earlier teaching (Matthew 10:24) where He teaches them that they are to expect to be treated

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as He had been treated. The likelihood of the world accepting the words of the disciples was equal to the possibility they would accept the teachings of Jesus. This dramatically emphasizes the apparent impossibility that they would be treated differently than their Master.

Verse 21. Their rejection would reflect on them, that they personally knew God and had a relationship with Him through Jesus. Those that rejected them by this action showed their complete ignorance of God and His mission through His Son. Because they knew not God, they also would not accept the One sent by Him, the Christ, His only begotten Son. As the disciples witnessed, that Jesus was indeed the Christ, this was the ground upon all accusations against them. To know God and not know His Christ is impossible. To know Christ and not know God is likewise impossible.

Verse 22. Jesus states that rejection of Him was a conscious sin on the Jews' part, because He had plainly told them that He was the Christ, the only-begotten of the Father, and that His works were from God. If He had not done these things, then they would have no sin in rejecting Him. According to their knowledge and authority, they should have recognized who Jesus was. Now they have no excuse or defense.

Verse 23. As Jesus had revealed the Father and His love continually in His ministry, therefore anyone who rejected Jesus, effectually rejected His Father, also.

Verse 24. The works that He had done among them - that had never been done before, should have been enough to convince anyone that only one sent by God could do these things. Jesus, as God's representative, only did works to show the grace and mercy, as part of God's will toward men. This they had also rejected, showing their hate toward both Jesus and His Father.

Verse 25. This was a fulfilling of Old Testament prophecy in Psalms 34, 35, and 68. They hated Him, without cause. All He had done contained no sin. Only a holy and giving ministry both in word and deed.

Verse 26. After what had been said about rejection, Jesus then gives them the positive side. The power of the coming Holy Spirit will succeed in establishing the very truth which proceeded from the Father concerning the gospel mission of His Christ.

Verse 27. The disciples had been with Jesus from the beginning and therefore were eyewitnesses of every aspect of His work and teaching - they could tell about what Jesus had said and done generally, but also describe their own personal experiences with the Lord.

Lesson XXVII continued

Chapter 16:1-11. The Hatred of the World, the Separation and the Mission of the Holy Spirit.

"1 These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended.

2 They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.

3 And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.

4 But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. ¶ And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.

5 But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?

6 But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart.

7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

9 of sin, because they believe not on me;

10 of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;

11 of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged."

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Verse 1. All the things Jesus had previously spoken were to prepare the disciples for what was yet to come. They must know in advance of the violent opposition to Jesus by the very leaders of the Jewish nation who should have been the ones to understand and accept the true fulfillment of prophecy as embodied in the teaching and works of Jesus their Messiah. This unbelief and rejection by the majority of the Jews was to be a severe trial to the disciples.

Verse 2. To be put out of the religious traditions and synagogues was only the first step of what would become hatred. Then putting to death of one of Jesus' followers would be counted as a religious duty. This would begin among the Jews, but also the Gentiles as the Church spread among them.

Verse 3. These actions resulted from their rejection of God and His will revealed in the ministry of Jesus. It was put before them. By not recognizing Jesus as sent by God, they did not acknowledge Jesus or His Father who sent Him.

Verse 4. Jesus told the disciples these things before they came to pass. When they did occur, they would remember what Jesus had said, and thereby be encouraged - that these things Jesus had

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already known and were therefore clearly part of God's perfect plan. He had not told them earlier as He was continually with them, but now particularly because He was soon to leave them.

Verse 5. Before this Jesus had stood up to the increasing hostility, thereby shielding the disciples. Now Jesus was going away. His mission was almost over and He was going back to the Father. The disciples seem to be only able to contemplate their own feelings of loss, and not the eternal significance of Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension to their salvation and their own mission.

Verse 6. This verse reemphasizes the feelings the disciples were feeling - the coming suffering and separation from their Lord. This was sad and confusing to them.

Verse 7. Jesus informs them that His going away will allow Him to send the Holy Spirit to dwell within them. This truth explains that only His leaving will allow the Spirit to come by His direction. This they could not perceive in the present situation. His limited bodily presence will be superceded by the universal presence of the Spirit. Only by Christ's atonement could the Spirit be allowed to descend on individual believing, reconciled people.

Verse 8. Jesus then describes the work of the Spirit in the Church Age. The Spirit is to make clear to the entire world that they are separated from God: that they are living in sin. The word 'convicts' includes the ideas of unquestionable proof after authoritative investigating of judgment, and of punishment. The truth will be shown in a clear fashion so that the accused faces this evidence, and if he rejects Jesus, he will face judgment. This convicting by the Spirit includes the possibility of restoration of the one in the wrong.

The role of the Paraclete in the life of the disciples was to make those who they come into contact with to face the Truth - those persons are forced to choose: to accept or reject that truth - choosing thereby life or death. This was to be the Apostles' experience and that of the faithful throughout the Church Age.

A person's eternal situation is determined by his/her relationship with sin, righteousness, and judgment. This is tested by their reactions to each of these. Man has fallen; sin is his condition. This being recognized, an outward remedy is offered only in Jesus - otherwise only judgment can follow. Any manmade attempt at working out his own righteousness will always fail, therefore only condemnation, judgment, and punishment can follow.

The error of the world is clearly seen in the historical facts that the world's representatives in the Jewish leaders case, trusted in their own righteousness, they accused and condemned Jesus as a criminal, a sinner, and then judged and caused to have Him punished by death on the cross. The Spirit will show the Truth



Lesson XXVII continued

about sin, righteousness, and judgment, thereby showing the need of a complete change by men.

Verse 9. The Spirit will reprove the world of sin, because they do not believe in God's Christ. Sin is selfishness that chooses its own way - thereby rejecting God's way and His plan for man's redemption. To believe Jesus is to surrender one's selfish will to God. The Spirit of God, through the spoken and written word, only shows the true nature of man's sin, leaving all men without excuse.

Verse 10. The ministry of Jesus showed true righteousness. By Christ's obedience, He showed the true beauty of God's law and the included divine fellowship with the Father which went beyond death, into eternity. The words and works of Christ's human life showed the ideal that God had designed for man. The contrast with man's sin was also shown - with consequences of judgment. By the completion of His mission, Jesus returns to Heaven, welcomed by the Father as one who completely fulfilled His Law. This was and is and ever will be the glory of God's righteousness, which no man could ever fulfill - only Jesus could and did.

That Jesus was condemned by the highest representatives of the Jewish nation reveals their complete misunderstanding of God's righteousness. The Spirit's ministry therefore is to reveal to men the true divine aspects of human life as shown in the ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus. The possibility of what fellowship with Him could bring to each believer includes being raised to Heaven into eternity through Jesus, into eternal fellowship with the Father also. Jesus' life showed that true righteousness is far different from outward fulfillment of certain ceremonial or moral observances. As Jesus goes to the Father, they will see Him no more.

Verse 11. Of judgment because the ruler of this world has been judged. Before the ministry of Jesus, the world had judged success and failure by its own standards. This was now overthrown. The Passion of Jesus is the standard where the true value of human life and death is finally to be measured. The Spirit reveals the Truth of God's righteousness. That is what human life will be judged by. Jesus had already fulfilled God's righteousness, and satan had been found guilty and judged by Christ's victory over every temptation and sin.

Next, the Spirit's ministry and the disciples.  
Verses 12-15.

Lesson XXVIII

John 16:12-15.

"12 ¶ I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.

14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.

15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you."

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The Holy Spirit will continue the teaching of Jesus to the disciples of all the Truth. This work glorifies Jesus to Whom all things belong. One of the results of this work of the Spirit will come to include the writing of the Gospels to record their witness of the life and teaching of Jesus to be passed down the centuries even to our own time. What they learned of the Spirit, they taught. What they taught, they also wrote by the Spirit.

Verse 12. Jesus knew that the disciples were not, at their present condition of spiritual growth, able to grasp or hear the purpose of His soon coming condemnation and death on the cross. It would only be clear after His resurrection.

Verse 13. Jesus then describes the work of the promised New Comforter. He personally will guide them into all truth, revealing the complete Truth concerning the will of God in the Incarnation of His Son. He shall speak of Christ's work in all of its parts - past, present, future.

The word "guide" includes the cooperation of the individual believer - it is a journey begun by faith and continuing on the path of Truth unto a closer relationship with Jesus and the Father.

The work and message of Jesus in His human life was historical and finite, complete. The work of the Spirit in teaching about the meaning and value of Christ's work will continue until the last soul enters His church. Everything that God wishes to reveal to the church will be communicated by the Spirit (whatsoever). What he hears (whether from the Father or the Son) he shall speak.

A special work was also the responsibility of the Spirit unto the apostles. They were to go through crisis and tribulation - their world was to change forever. The Spirit was to guide them through these times, by showing them things to come. All this refers to the beginning and building of the Christian Church which will grow and stand until the time the Church Age closes (at the Rapture).

Lesson XXVIII continued

Verse 14. Jesus describes the work of the divine Person of the Holy Spirit as like the work toward Him, as His work was in relation to the Father. The Spirit would show the full glory embodied in the whole Truth concerning Christ. This would include all aspects of Christ's present work as our High Priest, our Advocate, interceding for us with the Father.

All that is Christ's is available to the Spirit, and He shall teach all things in their individual parts to them.

Verse 15. The truth that originated with the Father belonged also to the Son - divine and absolute. The Spirit had already begun His ministry - He taketh and will continue - in this way all Truth was available to the Spirit and His only Mission to the disciples was to reveal all aspects of God's divine Truth in Jesus to them.

Verses 16-29. Sorrow that turns to Joy.

"16 ¶ A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.

17 Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father?

18 They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith.

19 Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me?

20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.

21 A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.

22 And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.

23 And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.

24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

25 ¶ These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father.

26 At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you:

27 for the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.

Lesson XXVIII continued

28 I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.

29 ¶ His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb."

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Jesus now explains what the circumstances will be like for the disciples. Their relationship with Him will be changed. At first there will be deep sorrow, which will turn into joy - this joy will remain until all things are fulfilled.

Verse 16. Jesus is suggesting a contrast of the way the disciples will experience His presence. They have been continually in the physical presence of Jesus. During this time, they slowly grew to know more and more about who Jesus is, but this had limitations. After the Resurrection, His glorified presence showed them His true divine nature. This happened on several occasions and then at Pentecost the spiritual presence of our Lord was given through the Holy Spirit. At His return will be the final and completed Revelation, which will continue through eternity. Each of these stages are followed by a return to the Father.

Verses 17,18. Some of the disciples are confused by all this and question among themselves what Jesus could mean by not seeing, then seeing, then going to the Father. Jesus was to leave, then what was to happen? It was disturbing enough that Jesus was going to leave them. How long is "a little while", where was He going, and why was He going? What happens then? Going to the Father, returning in "a little while"? They are unable to understand Jesus' meaning.

Verse 19. The disciples were acting confused and talking quietly among themselves. This let Jesus know of their desire for further explanation of His words. Jesus also knew their hearts. He repeats what He had previously said, recorded in verse 16.

Verse 20. Jesus most seriously describes the emotions they will experience. First, they will experience deep sorrow at his death. This should not take them by surprise, nor that the majority of the people (the world) will be glad when Jesus dies. They will think that He is lost to them forever, but this great sorrow shall be turned into joy. After this second, little while (the Resurrection) their sadness will be wiped away by His return to them and replaced by the greatest gift of His glorified presence with them.

Verse 21. As an example, Jesus describes the universal experience of women. Painful and difficult are the contractions of her labor in giving birth. But once the child is born, joy displaces the sorrow of pain. That the child has all the attributes and potential of a full and wonderful life fills the

Lesson XXVIII continued

mother's thoughts. "Into the world" includes the idea of the part the child will play in the new sphere of existence.

The image of a new birth is applied also to the new relationship with the Father through accepting the salvation through the sacrifice of the Son.

Verse 22. The disciples in this instance are seen as those who would give birth to the Church. They would now have great sorrow in the death and separation of Jesus from them. Then the resurrection will bring joy and the new role they would play in proclaiming the Gospel of the Risen Savior to the world.

This image also must include the extremity of sorrow and pain that Jesus would experience in death and the grave in order to bring the new birth unto eternity to all humanity.

Jesus assures them that He will come back to them after His sacrifice, and His coming will bring joy unspeakable. After His sacrifice and resurrection, they will be the sole objects of His time and attention. They are the most important people in the world to Him, for they are soon to become the parents of the new birth of the church. The joy they experience was to remain constant and strong. Though they will face many adversaries, yet even those against them could not defeat them. Their joy would stand against any foe. So should it be with us.

Verse 23. When they have experienced the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, they will no longer need to ask Jesus questions as they did before, but the Spirit will make all things clear. They will no longer be confused about their relationship to Christ or His relationship with the Father. They will know of a certainty of their own relationship with the Father.

Verily, verily, introduces a new aspect of their relationship with God through Jesus. This new relationship brings them into the will of God. Therefore anything they pray for should also be in conformity to His will through Jesus. They should pray in Jesus' name, and the Father will grant their prayers also in Jesus' name. The Holy Spirit also was sent to bring divine gifts in His name.

Verse 24. Before this time to come the disciples will not have the full realization of Jesus as the Christ, nor comprehend the power it would include. Jesus speaks of that which had not yet come as already accomplished. He tells them to ask - which implies a continuous prayer, not a one time request. The continuing result of this relationship will be fulness of joy. The certainty of receiving also includes their relationship with God keeping them within His will.

Even with earthly parents, a child knows what they can ask of the parents that is certain be granted. They also clearly know what won't.

As we grow closer to our Heavenly Father through His Word, we know better His will for our lives, thereby understanding how to ask and what to ask for. Yes, it is that simple.

Lesson XXVIII continued

Verses 25-27. These verses more fully explain the new relationship between believers and the Heavenly Father that Christ brings. Fulfillment of prayer in Christ's name will be part of that relationship - as Father to child.

Verse 25. Jesus had previously used figures to partially explain these things (the Vine and branches, the woman in travail). The deeper meaning was within the words, but were not intelligible to men who could only understand what was obvious from a human point of view. The deeper spiritual meaning would be given to them as they could bear it. Then Jesus would make it plain.

When the time comes, Pentecost, Christ - through the Holy Spirit - declared openly and clearly the Gospel of reconciliation offered to men from God through Jesus Christ.

Verse 26. Also at that day, part of the Holy Spirit's ministry will be knowledge unto fulness of prayer. The Spirit will guide believers into bolder requests in Jesus' name. Confidence will be greater because of the direct connection with the Father. Jesus will no longer have to intercede for believers' requests. Jesus does still intercede for us because of our imperfections (I John 2:1).

Verse 27. The Father loves them because of their love for His Son - now God loves them also as sons. The Father's love indeed made their love possible. They have believed that Jesus came forth from the Father. This denotes the leaving of a position, at the Father's side. This recognition of Christ's mission from God in heaven includes an understanding of His relationship with the Father. The love offered them they have accepted, and maintain.

Verse 28. This verse could be said to express Christ's complete work. He came from the Father and was born into this world. He is now about to leave the world, but only after His death and resurrection, and He then returns to the Father through His ascension.

What He hitherto described as His leaving - now is described as a journey to a destination with purpose.

Verse 29. What the disciples had expressed in misunderstanding, Jesus has clearly explained. The disciples express heartfelt thankfulness for His teaching them plainly. They are seemingly satisfied with what they now can comprehend. Jesus had told them that a future time will bring the clear and full revelation of the Father. This gives them a promise that fills them with hope. They can be content and assured in waiting until then because of what Jesus has told them.

Next, Jesus predicts the disciples' scattering.

Lesson XXIX

John 16:30-33.

"30 Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God.

31 Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?

32 Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

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After Jesus had more clearly explained His close relationship with God the Father, the disciples express the new confidence in His divinity as they now understood it.

Verse 30. Since Jesus had realized their confusion, even when they couldn't express it clearly - they were now satisfied that Christ knew best what they should know and when they should know it. Jesus also knows what they need before they ask Him about it. That Jesus could read their thoughts could only mean that He came from God. They had not yet perceived His true sacrifice soon to take place.

Verse 31. Jesus questions the power and persistence of their professed new faith. Their greatest trial was about to take place.

Verse 32. Jesus now predicts what is about to take place. What had held them together was about to be removed. They would be scattered in different directions, each looking out for themselves. Though they will leave Him, yet the Father will not leave Him to be alone - not now, not ever.

Verse 33. All these things Jesus has told them after Judas left, He has told them so they might have peace in their minds and hearts. This they will have in Jesus. In the world they will experience tribulation. Even before the completion and victory of His death and resurrection Jesus speaks of it as already accomplished, "I have overcome the world." Their joy, even in tribulation, comes from Jesus' victory over all things of this world, even the death of the cross.

John 17:1-5.

"1 These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:

2 as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

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3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

4 I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

5 And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

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This was Jesus' prayer, said aloud for the benefit of the disciples. These words reveal His mission for the good of men, and the fellowship with the Father through Whom all is accomplished. Jesus expresses the fulfillment of the will of the Father, and His own will (verse 24).

The first 5 verses relate the relationship of the Son to the Father, then His relationship with His close disciples (6-19), then the Son and the Church (20-26).

Verse 1. "These words" refers back to Jesus' preceding discourse of warning the disciples of what was about to take place - giving them faith and hope that He would finally be triumphant. Now, Jesus turns heavenward and begins speaking to His Father as in perfect fellowship with Him. Everything has been done in preparation for this hour, which will complete His work of redemption. The glorifying of the Son speaks to His victory over death, which will be established by the Resurrection and Ascension. This will more fully reveal the true nature of God to men. To know God is to give Him honor. Jesus was sent to show the will of the Father, which was to save men from their sins.

Verse 2. "Even as thou gavest Him authority" In His exaltation Jesus sends the gift of eternal life through the Holy Spirit to men - the term flesh is a word that expresses man's sinful nature. All this also explains the helplessness of man to do anything to be reconciled to God. Only the work of Jesus had the power to bring that to pass. This Gospel was to be offered to all mankind. God gives all the chosen ones to Christ that He then gives eternal life to them. This offer to all and then given to chosen ones is a paradox that will remain so until on some occasion God wishes to reveal this to us in heaven. Until then we must accept both statements as true.

Verse 3. This definition of "life eternal" includes a knowledge of God, through the completed work of Christ, who God sent for that very purpose. This knowledge begins with the new birth and must continue to grow into maturity. This is also the continuing work of the Holy Spirit within each believer. This knowledge also includes the fact that The Word of God is spirit and is life and is truth. This knowledge is not just acquaintance with facts or ideas, nor is it only admitting that they are true, but is a much deeper acceptance of forgiveness, and perfect love, to a lively faith that becomes an integral part of one's daily



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life. The consummation will take place when we see Jesus as He is, when we meet Him face to face, whether after death, or at His coming.

The use of both Jesus and Christ indicates the human side (Jesus) and the divine mission of the promised Christ. "Whom thou hast sent" again points to the singular historic fact of that divine mission coming from the perfect will of the Father.

Verse 4. Here Jesus' glorification is the result of work done - spoken in the first person "I have..." closely related to thee and thou of the Father. The absolute obedience and love of the life of Christ was considered finished, and all this glorified the Father.

Verse 5. Now that the hour has come, Jesus speaks of the glory which He had with the Father before the world was as the eternal Word of God. He had put aside this glory by taking on the Incarnation as a human being. This glory He would take up again by His Ascension.

Verses 6-19. The Son and the Disciples.

"6 ¶ I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.

7 Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee.

8 For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

10 And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.

11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

13 And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world."

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Jesus prays for the new relationship He will have with the in the Future.

Verse 6. Jesus had revealed Himself to them, they were the Father's, and they have kept His word. These three things are part of true discipleship:

1. Jesus has revealed His divinity and relationship with the Father.

2. Their relationship with the Father "thine they were."

3. "They have kept thy word." They have taken the message of God through Jesus into their minds and hearts as faithful and true.

Christ has shown to them the true nature of His relationship with the Father which is perfect. This closeness was a new revelation and taught only to the disciples. Only by the drawing of the Father could men be able to accept the teaching of the Son. Christ is also described as drawing men. And from man's side, they also choose freely to follow Him.

The complete revelation of Jesus as the Christ is included as the Father's word. The disciples have accepted this message and continue to keep it and learn more.

Verses 7,8. The disciples had, in trusting Jesus, come gradually to know by personal experience that Jesus was in close communion with the Father, and that all He said and did was in obedience to the Father's will. This included all the teachings, the healings, the miracles, and the love offered. All these things revealed the love of God.

Verse 8. What Jesus gave them, they have accepted. Before in parts, now complete.

The disciples received, and know, and believe. All things that Jesus did convinced them, that of a surety, He was sent by God to perform a special mission among men.

Verse 9. In thinking of their future, Jesus prays for them. The first person pronoun "I" is used throughout. It emphasizes His love and care for them as He is about to leave them. This prayer is specifically for these that are to continue His mission in the world. That they will succeed is certain - they belong to the Father, having become His children through Jesus. Their relationship with Jesus was equally a relationship with the Father.

Verse 10. This is directly, clearly, and emphatically stated: "All mine are thine, and thine are mine." The perfect union of the Son and the Father.

Through the disciples accepting Jesus for who He is brings Him glory. By their confessions of faith, He is glorified. This is

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not a one time event, but continues throughout their lives. The coming founding of His church and its continuance brings glory to Jesus.

Verse 11. That Jesus is about to leave them is the situation making this prayer necessary. He returns to the Father in Heaven. They are left in the world. His relationship with them will change - no longer in the physical world, He will be with them through the Spirit. Jesus calls to His "Holy Father". Up till now, Jesus has kept the disciples from the influence of the world. His example was one of holiness. Here he asks the Father that through His influence of purity, and tenderness, He would keep them and continue teaching them to grow in knowledge and obedience to keep them safe. The Father will keep them in His own name - within which all spiritual truth is included. All of God's nature and attributes are included in His Name. Jesus had come in His Father's name, to reveal that name among men.

The goal is perfect unity - by choice, in love, as a family. This ideal is shown by that relationship of the Son with the Father - they are one. So Jesus wants us to be that close to Him and the Father and to each other. Our responsibility is to work in faith toward that goal, though unattainable on this earth. But each step is of increasing benefit for our personal growth and witness.

Verse 12. Jesus looks back over the time He has had His disciples with Him. He has carefully watched over them and also guarded, in the sense of protected them from any harm from without. He has kept them in the Father's Name. The Father gave them to Him and all remain with Him. Then the exception is mentioned that no misunderstanding could be later argued about. Judas Iscariot called the son of perdition, "the one who perished." This has always been part of the divine plan as scripture has prophesied.

Psalm 41:9-12.

End of lesson v.13. Amen and Amen.

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John 17:13-26.

"13 And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

20 ¶ Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

21 that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

24 Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

25 O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.

26 And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them."

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Verse 13. After looking back, Jesus now looks toward the immediate future - His going to the Father. What the disciples had up to this time enjoyed by being with Jesus was about to change. In this prayer, He gives them a vision of the new role He will have, by His being with the Father, making constant intercession for them. Jesus spoke this prayer aloud for their benefit, that when alone they could draw strength from His words and know that His joy was still with them through the Spirit, though Jesus was no longer with them.

Verse 14. The teaching of the Gospel is the Word of God. The disciples had received this and accepted it. It was power to them for strength and faith. They had experienced the hatred of the world and would continue to be persecuted. The values of the world were and are the opposite of the teachings of Jesus. The rejection of Jesus, even unto death, they would also face as His followers.

The world includes the whole human system of politics,

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government, economics, and religions. At the base of them all is sin - the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life. Ambition, greed, envy, success all are completely selfish attitudes.

Anyone who does not share these attitudes is not trusted by the world. They disrupt everything. They don't make deals. They don't go along with corruption. They tend to tell the truth. They can't be bought.

Jesus, throughout His public ministry, continually stood for light and truth. This world would not accept Him. They even became violent to maintain and remain in darkness. Even so today.

Verse 15. Jesus does not pray that the disciples be removed from this world. They were to proclaim the Gospel to all the world. Jesus prays for their protection from the influences of evil - the world system run by the evil one. Whether they were directly attacked, or drawn to give in to temptations around them.

Verse 16. The ending statement of verse 14 is repeated to introduce a new petition. After being protected, they need the strength that Jesus had. They must be hallowed - consecrated to the truth in Jesus. They would be facing the same hostility that He did. Conflict was certain, but also was the victory.

V. Sanctify. They are set apart unto a holy cause and mission. The complete Truth is in Christ, His deeds, His words, His revelation of the Father. Jesus as the Word of God brings spirit and life to each believer. This goes far beyond knowledge and understanding, but rather an atmosphere of eternal life within the new relationship with the Father through the Son. The word has transformed us into a new way of thinking and living. As the God's truth dwelled in Jesus perfectly, so the disciples would be equipped for their task. As all of Jesus' prayers, this one would also be granted.

Verse 18. As Jesus considers His mission as good as completed, He considers that He is sending His disciples into the world, just as His Father had sent Him.

Verse 19. Throughout His life Jesus showed His consecration unto perfect sacrifice - in serving His Father's will. This was to be finished by His sacrificial death. This was to be passed on to His disciples. By their (and our) relationship with Jesus, they (and we) are sanctified by the truth. This is accomplished through the Spirit.

Any message that is not taken directly from that truth will not ever lead to a person's salvation. Any mixture will included error. God only empowers His own words. Jesus as high priest had fulfilled the offering of sacrifice of His own life, and shedding of His own blood, in the holy of holies of the heavenly temple, thereby paying the penalty of sin for all mankind. Total

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dedication, a separation for a singular purpose, was necessary for Christ's mission to succeed.

This kind of devotion was to be passed on to the disciples. This includes a separation from worldly values and concerns. They must embody in their lives, a devotion to holiness. How could one still bound by his or her own sins be offering salvation to others? Though we cannot live without sinning, the world must see that we strive to a higher calling, that we have found forgiveness through the sacrifice of Jesus.

Verse 20. The prayer is now extended beyond the apostles before Him. This prayer includes all those who in the passage of time, would believe in Him. The word that Jesus has given them, they will pass on to others within their lives, and also what they would record. Through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, those things concerning Jesus would be brought to their remembrance for that singular purpose. Faith was to come by their recorded words.

Verse 21. Unity always comes first: the unity between the Father and the Son; this unity is to be shared with every believer; the believers' unity amongst themselves was the product of the unity of the Father and Son with each believer. The divine energy is shared with believers - it is like a spark of promise - a warmth of faith, a certainty of the love of God in Christ.

This kind of unity is completely foreign to the world's ways. This would be a dramatic witness to the world of the truth of the Gospel of Christ.

Verse 22. The glorious love of God that Jesus showed to the world was accepted and experienced by those first believers. This love holds believers together. This will manifest itself in every true believer's life. This includes all times and places unto the Return of Jesus for us at the Rapture.

Verse 23. The unity of believers is based upon Jesus, and the Father is in Him. Our unity is to be like that of Father and Son. Though the unity of Father and Son is perfect, that of believers is imperfect, and must be gradually realized. Believers can only imagine the perfect unity of Father and Son, but accept it as real. Believers have the example and motivation to strive to attain more unity by seeking and following God's will in their own lives.

As believers struggle to grow and mature into Christ's likeness, those around them will also gradually realize that there is something uniquely positive and valuable taking place. This leads to the recognition that the Gospel of Christ, the love of God, must be the Truth. These believers show a strength of faith and a sharing of love not possible on their own. This love, thankfully, transcends even the imperfection of each believer.

Verse 24. Jesus goes from prayer to an expression of His will

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- that the true believers be with Him in His heavenly glory, that they may be united with Him, beyond what is possible in their earthly lives. This includes centrally the reuniting of God and man. The continued and unchanged love of the Father for the Son involved the completion of Jesus' mission as Redeemer and Perfector of humanity. "Before the foundation of the world" reveals the eternal pre-Incarnation existence of Jesus, and the eternal bond between Him and the Father.

Verse 25. To the righteousness of the Father, Jesus pleads. Jesus had prepared His believers to be witnesses and will continue to reveal the truth of God's love to them. The world had not known God. These believers do believe that Jesus was sent by the Father with the mission of God's love and forgiveness. What before had been called a matter of faith was now accepted as a matter of factual knowledge.

Verse 26. Throughout Jesus' ministry, He declared that this was The Father's plan. Thus Christ had shown and will continue to show the Father to them that believe. Jesus wills that the love of the Father toward Him may be experienced by these believers, through His presence in them. This will be continued by the Holy Spirit. His victory over sin and death will be continued in them. They will be His representatives to the world. The word "love" is continually used as the source and bond of all unity.

Hebrews 1:1-3.

The complete Gospel of Jesus is profoundly summarized - from before the beginning of time through the Old Testament to the Incarnation, the Passion, the Ascension, and His being at the right hand of the Father.

Lesson XXXI

John 18:1-11. The Betrayal.

"1 When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples.

2 And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples.

3 Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.

4 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?

5 They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them.

6 As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground.

7 Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth.

8 Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way:

9 that the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none.

10 Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.

11 Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"

As before mentioned, John's account of these following events brings out the significance and deepest meaning these events have. These are spiritual and eternal, not simply chronological and historical. In his narrative, John assumes that the reader is familiar with facts recorded in the other Gospels. These are also incidents recorded only by John. Rather than take time to list all the differences between the Gospels, it would seem most helpful to state in order the main events recorded by all four Gospels:

Times listed are approximate.

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| 1 a.m.    | The agony in the garden, starting at the Betrayal and arrest. Jesus is taken to the high priest's house.              |
| 2 a.m.    | Examination before Annas.   |
| 3 a.m.    | Examination at an irregular meeting of the Sanhedrin before Caiaphas.   |
| 5 a.m.    | Sentence passed by the Sanhedrin in a lawful meeting after sunrise. Jesus is taken to Pilate for the first interview. |
| 5:30 a.m. | Examination before Herod. Then Jesus is sent back to Pilate. Then the scourging and mockery by soldiers of Pilate.    |
| 6:30 a.m. | Death sentence given by Pilate.   |



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7:00 a.m.	Second mockery by soldiers.
9:00 a.m.	The crucifixion.
12:00 noon	Jesus tells John to care for His mother.
12-3 p.m.	Darkness.
3:00 p.m.	Death.

John emphasizes the fact that Jesus allows this event to take place. He allows no harm to come to those who oppose Him, and protects the disciples even at this moment when He is arrested and put in chains and taken away.

Verse 1. After Jesus had finished telling His disciples what He knew was most beneficial, He with them, left the city. They went over the brook Cedron (likely meaning "at the cedars") to the Mount of Olives, where there was a garden. This was a familiar route to the place that they often spent the night. The name of the small farm this was part of was Gethsemane (Matthew, Mark).

Verse 2. That Judas knew this place tells us that Jesus had often stayed the night there when visiting Jerusalem. It also includes the idea that Jesus did not go there to hide as some have suggested. Jesus knew that Judas was coming, expecting to find them all there asleep, considering the lateness of the hour (1 a.m.). But as in other times of crisis, Jesus was up praying about the coming events.

Verse 3. It is assumed that the band of men was a small group of Roman soldiers (from Matthew 27:27 and Mark 15:16) and a group of temple guards - all sent by the chief priests and Pharisees. Judas was their guide. He was also to identify Jesus and was in front of the group as they approached. Though it was the time of the full moon, they carried lanterns and torches in case Jesus was trying to hide from them. The soldiers were carrying weapons, read to use force if needed.

Verse 4. Jesus was ready and He saw them coming. The events in God's plan for Jesus' Passion had begun. Jesus goes forth willingly. He went out from the garden, greeting them with the question, "Whom seek ye?"

Verse 5. Apparently several spoke together saying "Jesus of Nazareth," literally, "Jesus the Nazarene." Considering the lack of good light, they did not expect Jesus to be the one coming out to greet them, and did not recognize Him. Judas was there, but too surprised at the sudden appearance to approach Jesus.

Verse 6. Jesus said, "I am He," and they went backward and fell. The effect of Jesus' serene majesty was awe, fear, and uncertainty. It seems they had expected to search for some kind of violent criminal, who would fight and try to get away. But Jesus came to them completely calm and composed, showing no fear or

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guilt. What a shock. Some have suggested that some external force pushed the group backwards. It is possible Jesus had the power to cause this, but it was not necessary.

Verse 7. The question is repeated as well as the answer. As the crowd attempts to regain their composure, Jesus reminds them of their mission. They only repeat what they had been told and seemed to be waiting for some further instruction.

Verses 8,9. During the time up to now, the disciples had been awakened and had also come to where Jesus was. He again identifies Himself as the one they sought and suggests that the disciples be allowed to go their own way. It was necessary that they go free, that Jesus must suffer and die alone. Later, many would suffer and die for His sake. Those He had been given He had protected from outward harm, as He had previously promised (17:12).

Verse 10. Ever impetuous, Simon Peter, seeing that Jesus was being arrested, steps in. Only John mentions the names of Peter and Malchus - servant of the High Priest. Apparently, Malchus was among those that first came up to lay hands on Him. Peter draws his sword and attacks the man, cutting off his right ear. The healing of the ear by Jesus is recorded only by Luke (22:51). This would be the only possible reason for Peter not also being arrested.

Verse 11. Jesus tells Peter to put the sword back in its sheath. By mentioning the cup that the Father had given Him, He now reminds Peter that He had accepted this path and required no defense. He was willingly walking the path of the Father's will. Peter was not to even try to interfere further.

Verse 12. At this point, the Roman soldiers proceeded to bind Jesus.

John 18:12-27. The First Trials.

"12 ¶ Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him,

13 and led him away to Annas first; for he was father-in-law to Cai'aphas, which was the high priest that same year.

14 Now Cai'aphas was he, which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

15 ¶ And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest.

16 But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter.

17 Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also one of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not.

Lesson XXXI continued

18 And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals, for it was cold; and they warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself.

19 ¶ The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine.

20 Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing.

21 Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said.

22 And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so?

23 Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?

24 Now Annas had sent him bound unto Cai'aphas the high priest.

25 ¶ And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him, Art not thou also one of his disciples? He denied it, and said, I am not.

26 One of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him?

27 Peter then denied again; and immediately the cock crew."

Verse 13. Now safely bound Jesus is taken to Annas, father-in-law to Caiaphas, the current high priest. Annas had been the high priest from 7-14 A.D. Annas had six sons and each was given a turn. Eleazar was the first son to hold the office - then son-in-law Caiaphas who was high priest until 35-36 A.D. Four other sons succeeded him. The last one Had James the brother of Jesus put to death. This control of the high priest's position Annas held on to through his strong influence over his close family members. After what must have been a short questioning by Annas, Jesus is sent, still bound, to Caiaphas, also at the high priest's residence, a palace, enclosed by a wall and guarded gate.

Verse 14. John reminds us that Caiaphas is the one who had proclaimed to the Jews that one man should die for the people (11:50). Annas had obviously chosen Caiaphas as high priest, because he was like-minded and would follow Annas' lead.

Verse 15. After the first panic when all the disciples ran away, two returned to follow Jesus. Peter and another disciple - John - talking about himself but without including his name. No information is preserved about any connection between John and the High Priest. He is allowed to enter at the same time that Jesus was taken in.

Verse 16. Peter had not been allowed in. John noticed Peter still standing outside the gate. He went to the woman who tended the door and got her to let Peter in.

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Verse 17. The damsel or maid at the door asks Peter if he is not also a disciple of "this man". John had apparently gone on into the audience chamber to be near Jesus. Peter was alone. That she said 'also' implies that she knew John was a disciple and his coming to get Peter in suggested such a connection. The question seems to have been phrased in a contemptuous tone. Especially referring to Jesus as "this man." Peter responds in a similar tone, "I am not."

Verse 18. Apparently the Roman soldiers had gone and only the Temple guards and the high priest's servants were standing in the compound. They had a fire of charcoal - it being cold; and stood around to warm themselves. Peter joined the group, similarly warming himself.

Verse 19. The scene switches abruptly to within the area where Jesus was brought before Annas - considered as the same authority as Caiaphas. Verses 19-23 summarize their brief exchange. Annas wants Jesus to tell him about His disciples and His doctrine. What seems most likely, he was testing Jesus to see if He might admit to something that would help prosecute Him - to the point of reaching a death sentence. His mind was already made up.

Verse 20. In making His reply, Jesus tells them that all of His teachings were made publicly - particularly in synagogues and in the temple where many Jews were always present. As if to say that at any time any of the priests, scribes, or Pharisees could have easily stood by and listened to Him. In fact, on at least three occasions people had been sent to question Him and try to trick Him into saying something they could hold against Him. He insists that He said nothing different when He wasn't in public.

Verses 21,22. Jesus tells him that he should ask those who had heard Him teach - they should be able to easily remember what He had proclaimed to them. This was not acceptable - even impudent according to one of the temple officers standing near Jesus. With the palm of his hand he struck Jesus, saying "That's no way to talk to the high priest."

Verse 23. Jesus responds by asking if what He said was evil, was it in some way saying anything against the high priest - then what was it? If He had merely said a completely natural suggestion of where the high priest could get additional information, then there would be no reason for the blow.

Verse 24. This finished the preliminary trial by Annas in the presence of those who had arrested Him. He was then sent to another chamber where Caiaphas was with members of the Jewish council. John does not record the events of this trial (included in Matthew 26:57-68). This was still at night. He also does not

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mention the final trial by the complete Council of the Sanhedrin after daybreak - thus the only legal one. (Luke 22:66-21).

Since these had been recorded by the other Gospels, John continues to describe the trials of Peter which were taking place at the same time Jesus was being questioned.

Verse 25. Still warming himself, those also gathered around the fire noticed this stranger and asked him directly - was he not also one of Jesus' disciples? Again Peter's reply was 'I am not.'

Verse 26. One of the high priest's servants was also kinsman to the one whose ear Peter had cut off and who also had been among those who had gone to the garden to arrest Jesus. He asks, "hey, didn't I see you in the garden with Him?" For the third time, Peter denied even knowing the man. Then the rooster crowed. More details are found in Matthew 26:70-74 and Mark 14:71.

John does not mention the repentance of Peter, though in chapter 21:15 the forgiven Peter is present with the Lord in Galilee making the repentance an accepted fact. This event fulfills the word spoken by Jesus in chapter 13:38 concerning the denials of Peter. By these things coming to pass, Peter would, of a certainty, know that only the Son of God could know each detail before it happened. Thereby, his faith would also be grounded.

Next - Jesus before Pilate

Lesson XXXII

John 18:28-40. Civil Trial before Pilate.

"28 ¶ Then led they Jesus from Cai'aphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the Passover.

29 Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man?

30 They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee.

31 Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death:

32 that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die.

33 ¶ Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews?

34 Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?

35 Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done?

36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

38 Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? ¶ And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all.

39 But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the Passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

40 Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barab'bas. Now Barab'bas was a robber."

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The detailed recording of the private conversations between Jesus and Pilate are only found in John's Gospel. It is therefore obvious that he followed Jesus into the room where these took place. He had no scruples that the Jewish leader claimed. They felt they would be defiled to enter the Gentile seat of power. John had followed Jesus into the high priest's presence and now into the Judgment Hall of the Roman governor.

The description of the following events alternate between what took place within Pilate's hearing room, and what took place outside in public view.

Lesson XXXII continued

(V28-32) First Outside the judgment hall - the Jewish leaders call for Pilate to carry out the death sentence they had pronounced against Jesus.

(V33-37) Second Inside Pilate privately questions Jesus, where Jesus admits being a king.

(V38-40) Third Outside Pilate pronounces Jesus innocent - plus the pardoning of Barabbas.

(19:1-3) Fourth Inside Jesus whipped and mocked.

(19:4-7) Fifth Outside Second and Third declarations of Jesus' innocence.

(19:8-11) Sixth Inside Pilate insists Jesus defend Himself. Jesus tells him the will of God is coming to pass.

(19:12-16). Seventh Outside The Jews cry out that Pilate must crucify Jesus or he will be accused of being against Caesar. Pilate gives in.

Back to verse 28. Because the Sanhedrin did not have the authority to carry out a death sentence, they had to convince the Roman governor to carry it out. Jesus was taken to the residence and headquarters of the governor, called the Hall of Judgment.

That it was early indicates it being not long after sun-up. Apparently, the Sanhedrin had formally met after sunrise, and confirmed the sentence already passed. This satisfied the letter of the Law that stated trials must be held in daylight. They would, however, break the law which stated that a trial and the sentence of that trial could not be carried out on the same day. Roman court also had to be held in the daytime. Apparently Pilate had been informed somewhat of what these Jewish leaders were up to. Possibly when they had asked for the soldiers during the night Jesus was taken within the building while the accusers stayed outside. Their belief was that going into a Gentile building would defile them and thereby exclude them from taking part in the Passover.

Verse 29. Pilate came out of the judgment hall, a concession to the Jewish leaders' religious belief in defilement. This seems like an unusually informal manner to conduct a trial, so that Pilate requests that they state a formal accusation against Jesus. This does not necessarily suggest that Pilate had no idea what this was all about.

Verse 30. They reply that they had found him guilty or else they wouldn't have brought Him here, but they give no details about the case at all.

Verses 31,32. Pilate sees no grounds for his own involvement, thinking they had found Jesus guilty according to their religious laws. He therefore advised them to judge Him themselves according to their own law. Then finally they speak the true reason for bringing Him to Pilate. They wished Jesus to be put to death, but under Roman law they were not permitted to carry out the death penalty. The Roman manner of execution was crucifixion. Now they

Lesson XXXII continued

must convince Pilate that Jesus was guilty of more than breaking religious law, that he had done something that called for execution under Roman law. At this point, the Jews must have brought forth the accusation of treason against Jesus.

Verse 33. Pilate went back into the judgment hall and called Jesus to him, asking Him if He was indeed the King of the Jews.

Verse 34. Jesus replies with a question. Had Pilate perceived this himself, or was he repeating what others had told him?

Verse 35. Pilate's reply shows his disinterest in anything related to Jewish matters. Though these despised people in the past seemed to rally behind any leader who stood up for the nation - this case was very different. The Jewish leaders are bringing one called their King to Pilate for execution. But he is curious as to what Jesus could have possibly done to bring them to this drastic action.

Verse 36. Jesus made the reply that His kingdom is not part of this earthly world. If it had been, His disciples would have fought to keep Jesus from being arrested by the Jews. But the source and authority of His kingdom was in Heaven. This posed no threat to the Roman Empire. That he had peacefully come forward to be arrested was evidence that there was no violence in His ministry. It is interesting to note the often used "kingdom of heaven" in Matthew's Gospel emphasizes the same idea, Christ's kingdom is not of this world, but His Kingdom is in the world just as He and the disciples were in the world but not of the world.

Verse 37. Pilate put forward the question again, is Jesus admitting that He is a king? Some scorn can be easily imagined in Pilate's manner. Jesus replied that Pilate had said these words from the suggestion of others. Now Jesus explained in what way this title must be understood. He briefly sums up the plan of the Father. This was the reason He had been sent to the world to be born as a man, and to proclaim the truth about God's love and plan for reconciliation with man. He includes the idea of the chosen as the ones that respond to His message - that they recognize in His voice the Truth of the Father.

When Jesus addressed the Jews He spoke in the terms of Old Testament prophecy. Here He refers to the innate conscience within every man. As king He points to a future showing forth of His Glory. At present He speaks of the present revealing of Truth. In His way Jesus points to His double role - first as the King of the People of God, and as Saviour to all mankind.

Verse 38. The way Pilate states the question, "What is truth?" seems more rhetorical than literal: It is as if he were suggesting to himself that in even daily matters of contention, the truth could rarely be found out. The Truth as Jesus used the



Lesson XXXII continued

word, Pilate had one conception of. In his judging of cases brought before him, the truth was very difficult to arrive at and sometimes impossible. So, after saying that, he broke off the conversation and went out again to speak to the Jews waiting there. What he heard from Jesus led him to decide the case - that he found no fault in Jesus.

Between verses 38 and 39, John omits several things included in the other Gospels. First the outcry of the chief priests (Mark 15:3-12); also Pilate sending Jesus to Herod and the brutal treatment and mockery by his soldiers; finally Herod sending Him back to Pilate (Luke 23:5-18). Pilate, by his authority, could have released Jesus, having found no fault in Him. However, he felt the danger of angering the agitated crowd.

Verse 39. In deference to the agitated crowd, Pilate decides to try a possible way out. He refers to the custom of releasing a prisoner on the occasion of the Passover. Mark's accounts suggest that this was first voiced by a faction of the crowd that had been gathering.

The suggestion of a notorious criminal named Barabbas was then voiced. To contrast Jesus with this man, Pilate may have thought that the crowd would choose Jesus. The priests and the leaders pushed the chanting of "Barabbas" until the whole crowd joined in. This forced Pilate to give in to the force of the shouting crowd. He certainly would do what was necessary to avoid a riot. He was forced to release a man who had been found guilty of crimes deserving the death penalty, and keep Jesus, who the Jews had accused of crimes as serious.

Verse 40. The crowd again cried out. Pilate offered to release "The King of the Jews". The one released was supposed to be guilty - Pilate was therefore suggesting that he would count Jesus as guilty if He would be the one to be released. Pilate also offered to have Jesus whipped if that would satisfy the crowd (Luke 23:16). Not satisfied, the crowd shouted "Not this man, but Barabbas!"

Barabbas was a bandit, one who used force. Luke writes that he was also a murderer. The name Barabbas means "Son of a father". This son of a nameless father is released as the true Son of the Father is condemned to death.

Thus ends Chapter 18. Chapter 19 begins with the whipping, the robe and crown of the thorns, the mocking and hitting by Pilate's soldiers. Pilate then goes out to the crowd and announces he is bringing out news to them.

Lesson XXXIII

John 19:1-11. Conclusion of Christ before Pilate.

"1 Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him.

2 And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe,

3 and said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands.

4 Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him.

5 Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man!

6 When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him.

7 The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.

8 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid;

9 and went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer.

10 Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?

11 Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin."

An outline of the events in these verses:

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| Verses 1-3. | I. Christ is beaten and mocked.           |
| Verse 4.    | II. Pilate again declares Jesus innocent. |
| Verse 5.    | III. Pilate appeals to the Jews.          |
| Verses 6,7. | IV. The Jews respond.                     |
| Verses 8,9. | V. Pilate's fear.                         |
| Verse 10.   | VI. Pilate boasts.                        |
| Verse 11.   | VII. Jesus reveals true authority.        |

If you consider the repeated attempts by Pilate to release Jesus then as recorded in Matthew 27:19, Luke 23:20,22, John 18:31,39, Acts 3:13 show at least seven times. Through all this Pilate knew Jesus was not guilty of any crime. Though he was the governor, he finally gave in. He was prevented from releasing Jesus and forced to sentence Him to death. For all his earthly authority and power, Pilate could not thwart the predetermined will of God.

Acts 4:27,28: "Both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."

Lesson XXXIII continued

This included Jews and Gentiles, who also would both be offered forgiveness of sin, by Jesus' sacrificial death on the cross. Even if God's will included Pilate's sentencing Jesus to death, Pilate still sinned by sentencing Him. But those who brought Jesus to him had the greater sin.

Verse 1. This was another attempt by Pilate to assuage the excited mob. He hoped they would be satisfied if he had Jesus beaten 39 strokes with the cruel roman whip. His soldiers also mocked Jesus and treated Him brutally. Apparently, he hoped that if the Jews saw their reputed king beaten and bloody, they would have mercy, and allow Jesus to be released. It was according to history that this scourging was usually done before crucifixion. Sometimes people would die from the beating. Some records mention beating with rods.

Verses 2,3. A crown of thorns and a purple robe were put on Jesus, as the soldiers mocked and hit Him as they chanted, "Hail, king of the Jews." All these things were totally against the normal concept of Roman law and justice. The promise of Genesis 3:15 is at its climax - the enmity between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman. This was the hour when the serpent would bruise the Saviour's heel. Both Jews and Gentiles were carrying out the hatred of satan in condemning God's Son to death. They not only condemned Him without cause, but also mocked Him, beat Him, and spat upon Him in the vilest and most violent manner. He who had come to deliver man from the curse of sin was crowned with thorns which were part of that curse (Genesis 3:17,18).

Verse 4. Pilate went outside again and told the crowd that he was bringing Jesus out to them, that he had done all he intended to do. He had found no cause for a death sentence and was turning Jesus back over to the Jewish leaders. Jesus offered no defense, but as a lamb was silent before His shearers. Pilate announces "Behold the man!" He offers the sight of a beaten and bleeding Jesus to the crowd, hoping that they would have some pity for Him. Pilate was impressed with the dignity, courage, and nobility of Jesus. No one else brought before Pilate had acted in this way.

Verse 6. The Jews (chief priests - temple officers) were not satisfied at all, but called out for His crucifixion. Only His cruel death would satisfy their cries. The chief priests were in front leading their followers to cry out with them their demand. They only sat the word "crucify" repeatedly without even referring to Jesus. Again, Pilate states his judgment - "I find no fault in Him." If they want Him crucified - they should do it themselves. They challenged his judgment, insisting he was wrong. By suggesting they take Jesus and crucify Him, he was daring them to break Roman law. They would then be guilty. Would they defy Roman authority? They knew that Pilate had not given them permission to crucify Jesus.

Lesson XXXIII continued

Verse 7. They now bring up their own law that required the death penalty - that Jesus had claimed to be the Son of God (Leviticus 24:16). They were trying to portray Jesus as a dangerous threat to their religion, and in turn to the Roman peace. The crime was blasphemy. Their law called for stoning to death, yet here they demand crucifixion. The other Gospels mention other of their accusations against Jesus. In Matthew 26:61, He is charged with threatening to destroy the temple. In Luke 23:2, He is accused of perverting the nation, being a king, and of refusing to give tribute to Caesar. In Luke 23:5, of stirring up all the people. And finally here, of being the Son of God.

Verse 8. Pilate reacted with fear. What fear he had felt before was now increased. The difference between Jesus and every other man he had dealt with was worthy of awe. How would Jesus deal with him if this were true?

Verse 9. Pilate took Jesus again into the judgment hall, hoping to find out the truth from Jesus. He doesn't ask Jesus if He was the Son of God, but "whence art thou?" If He were from heaven, there might be a way yet to free Him. Jesus remained silent. Jesus had already told him about His kingdom, and had not said or done anything wrong - yet Pilate had treated Him cruelly, totally unjustly. Pilate was aware of his own wrong. Jesus was not going to give Pilate anything that would prolong or put off the necessary working out of God's will. Also, Pilate would not perceive God's truth, but continue to heed the Jews' cries.

Verse 10. Pilate is again surprised by Jesus not using this opportunity to give a defense or say something that would give him excuse to let Him go. He is also insulted by this refusal. He has power over Jesus - to decide whether Jesus would live or die. He puts himself forth as the highest authority, a proud politician; he is the governor of Judea, representative of the Emperor Caesar Augustus. Other prisoners would do or say anything to get his favor. That he claims the power of life or death shows that he sees his power even above the law he is charged to enforce. And indeed he is about to do so. This shows his own true nature. This showed his fear of resisting the opinion of the crowd - therefore he could not actually release Jesus.

Verse 11. Jesus answered that whatever power Pilate had was given him from above. Pilate claimed authority to choose even what was against the law. Jesus denied that power, that only the Father had that power: to decide what should happen and then carry it out. Pilate should realize that his power is within the will of God only. The power of Pilate was ordained by God. This did not spare Pilate of his guilt. There are degrees of sin and guilt, and therefore degrees of future punishment.

Next, Christ Condemned to Death. John 19:12-24.

Lesson XXXIV

John 19:25-42. The Death and Burial.

"25 ¶ Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cle'ophas, and Mary Mag'dalene.

26 When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son!

27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

28 ¶ After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.

29 Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth.

30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

31 ¶ The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was a high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

32 Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him.

33 But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs:

34 but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.

35 And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true; and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.

36 For these things were done, that the Scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.

37 And again another Scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.

38 ¶ And after this Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus.

39 And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pound weight.

40 Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.

41 Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid.

42 There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand."

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Though several of the miracles and teachings are found in only one of the Gospels, and the birth, baptism, and temptation in

Lesson XXXIV continued

only two, the Saviour's Passion is recorded in all four. This shows the greatest importance of the event - central to our faith. There are striking differences among what each writer includes and excludes. The guidance of the Holy Spirit led each writer as to what to include that was essential to the design of the Gospel narrative and the distinctive purpose each would have to reach different audiences.

Matthew reveals Jesus as the Christ, the Son of David, the King of Israel, their Promised Messiah.

Mark's emphasis is Jesus as the Suffering Servant, God's Missionary, who came to minister, not be ministered unto.

Luke depicts Jesus as the Son of Man, the Incarnate Son of God, to show His Perfect Righteousness in the ways He deals with men, both His followers, and those against Him.

John also deals with Jesus as the Incarnation of the Son of God, but emphasizes the divine side as the eternal Word of God becoming flesh. He reveals the dignity and majesty of His Person, His relationship with the Father, as decided and accepted in the divine councils before the foundation of the world.

Some examples that only John records:

1. The falling backward of those that came to arrest Jesus.
2. Jesus' words to Pilate about His kingdom.
3. To Pilate about coming to the world to bear witness to the truth.
4. Jesus' telling Pilate that he had no power to crucify Him except that given by God.
5. The mention of Jesus' seamless robe.
6. Jesus' legs not being broken.
7. The blood and water coming from His pierced side.
8. The triumphant cry from the cross - "It is finished."
9. Jesus being with the rich in His death.
10. The costly spices Nicodemus provided for Christ's body.

The four Gospels record 7 sayings of Jesus on the cross.

Brief outline:

1. Forgiveness toward His enemies (Luke 23:34).
2. Salvation to the dying thief on the cross next to Him (Luke 24:42,43).
3. Affection for His mother and her welfare (John 19:25,26).
4. Anguish of being forsaken by God. (Matthew 27:46)
5. The Suffering of thirst spoken. (John 19:28)
6. Victory in the words, "It is finished." (John 19:30)
7. Giving the care of His Spirit unto the Father in perfect faith and foreknowledge. (Luke 23:46).

The three parts recorded by John are included in the verses of this section.

John 19:25-42.

Lesson XXXIV continued

"25 ¶ Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cle'ophas, and Mary Mag'dalene.

26 When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son!

27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

28 ¶ After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.

29 Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth.

30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

31 ¶ The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was a high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

32 Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him.

33 But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs:

34 but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.

35 And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true; and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.

36 For these things were done, that the Scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.

37 And again another Scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.

38 ¶ And after this Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus.

39 And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pound weight.

40 Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.

41 Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid.

42 There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.

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Verse 25. The three Marys stood by the Cross: the mother of Jesus, her sister Marry married to Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. They were obviously devoted to Jesus. This may have occasioned Jesus' mother to recall the prophecy spoken by Simon more than 30 years previous, that a sword would pierce her own soul. It seems

Lesson XXXIV continued

likely that Mary, His mother's sister, was sister to Joseph, thereby her sister-in-law - since it seems hardly likely that two sisters would be given the same name. Mary of Magdala, who Christ had cast 7 demons from, would be the first one Christ appeared to after His resurrection. The name Mary means "bitterness" or "anguish of spirit", which was certainly what they felt at this time.

As far as Scripture reveals, the only one of the disciples was the beloved disciple, John. At this point, when rejected by the nation, deserted by the disciples (with the exception of John, here a mother's devotion to her son is plainly shown). Apparently she suffered quietly, as the crowd mocked and taunted the Saviour, standing her ground.

Verse 26. Jesus, even at the time of His own anguish and suffering, took care of His widowed mother - but tendering her care to the beloved disciple John. Jesus would no longer consider Himself as Her Son as He was about to return to glory. Calling her "woman" (as at Cana) was not considered harsh or discourteous. He was going back to the Father, and wanted her to be cared for when that took place. He calls on her to henceforth consider the beloved disciple John as her son, and he would now be the one to take care of her.

Verse 27. He then addresses John, "Behold thy Mother." John, of all the disciples, had come to the cross, and stood by Mary. He is now given the blessed task of taking the place of Jesus, as her son, who would with strong affection look after her from then on. From that hour, he took her to his own home. Mary was spared from seeing Jesus die.

Jesus uses His people to care for others of His people. This follows the law of love - Jesus loved them, and brought them together, that also loved Him. That their companionship would be both materially and especially spiritually beneficial to both is without question.

Verse 28. After this, there were 3 hours of darkness. Jesus experienced the withdrawal of the Father's presence. It is now, the time of greatest trial, agony, and feeling of desolation. Though His physical thirst was very great, it was not for relief that He cried, "I thirst." It was that the Scriptures might be fulfilled (Psalm 69:21). Psalm 69:21b: "in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink."

Note: in Matthew 27:34, a previous offer had been refused. Commonly, vinegar and gall were offered to deaden the pain of those on the cross. Psalm 69:21a: "a gall for my meat"

Verse 29. There was a jar of vinegar (or sour wine) nearby - which was poured on a sponge, and the sponge placed on the end of a hyssop branch and lifted to the mouth of Jesus, most likely by a



Lesson XXXIV continued

Roman soldier. This could have been an act of compassion.

Verse 30. Once the vinegar passed through His lips, Jesus said, "Finished" - one word in the original language. One word that signified our Redemption. All things required by God's Law were done. All prophecies written aforetime of the Promised Messiah and His mission of mercy had come to pass. All the types and foreshadowing by the entire sacrificial system were accomplished. All words and deeds as depicted by the Will of the Father had been carried out. Nothing was left out. The wages of sin had been paid by the only Innocent One that was ever born as a human child. God's justice was satisfied. Case closed. What was to come, including His commending His spirit unto the Father, the resurrection, ascension, and being at God's right hand, were all fruits resulting from His finished work.

We can only try to understand a little of the thoughts and feelings of Jesus when He uttered the word. He had accomplished what the Father sent Him to do. However, He must have also been thinking of the redemption of all those He loved that the Father had given Him, and the unnumbered others that would believe on His Name, and receive forgiveness and reconciliation with God the Father - all in an eternal bond of grace, mercy, and love both now and forever. The Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, and every believer in a permanent, unbreakable relationship, all for our benefit, that we might be thankful and praise God for His loving kindness that lasts forever.

Verse 30. When Jesus bowed His head, it showed that up to that time, He was holding His head erect. He consciously and with purpose bowed His head. He then "gave up the spirit". In John 10, Jesus had described His coming death as His laying down His life of Himself, that He had the power to lay it down and to take it again. Only Jesus in all of human history, was the one who delivered up His spirit by His own will. Every other human has their spirit taken from them at death.

Verse 31. The Jews wanted to still follow their laws about the Sabbath. They asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified ones to be broken so they would die more quickly, and their bodies taken away before the Sabbath that would begin at sunset. It was not only the weekly Sabbath, but also the first day of the feast of unleavened bread - marking seven weeks to Pentecost. It was also the time of offering the sheaf of new corn. It was not uncommon for those that were crucified to be left on the cross, even several days after their death. For God's purpose, Jesus must be buried the same day as His death, and be in the grave for three days. Even though the Jews sought their own will - yet it coincided with God's will. Pilate also did his part for all prophecy to be fulfilled.

Verse The soldiers were ordered to carry out the Jews'

Lesson XXXIV continued

request. They broke the legs of the two criminals on Christ's either side. A heavy iron bar, or mallet, was used for this. Possibly they had already noticed that Jesus appeared already dead.

Verse 33. The soldiers did not break Jesus' legs because He was already dead. Crucifixion was usually a slow and painful way to die - often lasting up to 3 days, when exhaustion and collapse would cause death. Thus it was no surprise that two were still alive - but it was startling that Jesus was already dead. They had already been on their crosses about 6 hours. According to Mark 15:44, Pilate was surprised that Jesus was already dead. The Jews also had expected Jesus to still be alive. No one had control of Jesus' death; only He did.

Verse 34. One of the soldiers took a spear and pierced the side of Jesus, to make certain that He had died, not just fainted. This to make sure they would not incur Pilate's wrath at not carrying out his orders. Out came blood and water. Medical doctors made the observation that when a person dies of a ruptured heart, a large amount of blood goes into the pericardium. This blood separates into its more solid and liquid parts. When Christ's side - the pericardium was pierced by the spear from below, this caused a mingled (blood and water) stream to flow. To the Roman soldier, it was proof that Jesus was dead. The blood of the Lamb of God offered as sacrifice for our sins.

Some commentators call the blood and water a sign, pointing to the two Sacraments - baptism and Communion. Some also call them signs of atonement (the blood), purification (the water), justification and sanctification.

Verse 35. At some point after taking Mary to his home, John had returned to the scene and remained. He states that he was an eyewitness, and writes exactly what he saw and heard. He adds that his purpose in writing these truths was that those who would read his record would believe in the true sacrifice of Jesus for their sins.

Verse 36. Another scripture that was fulfilled is mentioned - that no bone would be broken - here quoting Psalm 34:20. This also points back to the Passover lamb, even earlier in Exodus 12:46. The Roman soldiers were given orders to break the bones of all three men. The bones of the other two were broken. That scripture must be fulfilled - God had power to carry it out even in the finest detail of prophecy.

Verse 37. Another prophecy (Zechariah 12:10) refers to a yet future time when Israel shall look upon Him whom they pierced.

Verse 28. Jesus was executed as a criminal among criminals. As executed criminals, their bodies would be buried in a common

Lesson XXXIV continued

and unmarked grave - a hole in the ground. This would not be the destiny of the body of Jesus. Isaiah 53:9 - "Men appointed his grave with the wicked, but he was with the rich in his death." The Holy Spirit led Joseph of Arimathea to step in, his being a disciple of Jesus. He had kept this quiet, being afraid of the Jews. Now that Jesus was dead, he boldly goes to Pilate and requests permission to take His body down from the cross and see to the burial. This was in accord with Roman law and goes with the instructions given to the soldiers - that the three criminals must die and their bodies taken away before sundown (verse 31). Pilate gave his consent. Joseph went to the cross and with some help no doubt took the body of Jesus down.

Verse 39. Nicodemus, possibly emboldened by the act of Joseph, came with about 100 lbs. of a mixture of myrrh and aloes, to anoint the body for burial. It is mentioned that he had at first come to Jesus at night, yet he now openly came to aid in the burial.

Verse 40. This describes the traditional manner of burial of that time among the Jews. This was the wrapping the body in swathes of linen covered with layers of the aromatic gum of myrrh with the powder of the aloe wood.

Verse 41. Near the place of crucifixion was a garden, where a new sepulchre had been carved out of rock. This was owned by Joseph (Matthew 27:60) and that it had not been used yet. This was the grave of a rich man as prophesied in Isaiah 53:9.

Verse 42. This emphasizes the nearness of the tomb and the lateness of the time - they most carefully laid the body of Jesus in the new tomb. This is not the end.

Next, Chapter XX - The Rest of the Story.

Lesson XXXV

John 19:12-24. Condemned to Death.

"12 ¶ And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar.

13 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gab'batha.

14 And it was the preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!

15 But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.

16 Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away.

17 ¶ And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Gol'gotha:

18 where they crucified him, and two others with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.

19 And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS.

20 This title then read many of the Jews; for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin.

21 Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews.

22 Pilate answered, What I have written I have written.

23 ¶ Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout.

24 They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the Scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did."

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Jesus' coming death was a propitiation that fully paid off God's holiness and justice regarding man's sin.

Pilate was sensitive to the accusation that he was no friend to Caesar. If the Jewish leaders sent complaints to the Emperor, that he was guilty of conspiracy and treason, the same charges that the Jews accused Jesus of, this could lead to Pilate's being deposed and possibly put to death himself. He had to choose - between letting Jesus go and face accusations himself or give in to the demands of the crowd. The Jews had held the accusation to the last - to hit Pilate at his weakest point. Here the Jews acted as if their greatest concern was for the Emperor of Rome rather than their own Messiah.

Lesson XXXV continued

Verse 12. Pilate had left Jesus in the judgment hall while he again came out, having decided to release Him. It is not recorded what Pilate said to the waiting crowd. Nothing he could have said could influence them. No matter what Pilate thought or felt about Jesus, he could not afford to displease Caesar. They had no real concern in claiming that they were looking out for the Emperor's behalf.

Man's sinful nature was shown to the greatest extreme. Both Pilate and the Jews did the exact opposite of what they should have done. They not only rejected Jesus and His message of love and forgiveness, but demanded His cruel death. Pilate, rather than standing for a fair and just trial, showing Jesus' innocence, gave in to the violent demand of the crowd.

Verse 13. Pilate brings Jesus out and sits down in the judgment seat called the Pavement. It was time for the final, and public pronouncement of the sentence.

Verse 14. Pilate says to them, "Behold your King!" It suggests that he is still hoping that the crowd would relent - another appeal to their usual nationalistic fervor. John notes the time as about the sixth hour after preparations for the Passover Sabbath which would begin at sunset on that day (Friday). These preparations were for food to be eaten on the Sabbath so that no cooking or other preparation would be done on the Sabbath. This had probably begun at sunup, it now being 6 hours later. The time recorded in Mark 15:25 was that at the third hour Jesus was crucified.

Verse 15. Their response was again violent - demanding that Jesus be taken away and be crucified. Pilate made one final appeal - why do they want him to have their own king killed? Their reply sealed the fate of Jesus. "We have no king but Caesar!" The chief priests were in the forefront with this cry. The very highest leaders of the religious traditions of the Chosen people have also herein rejected all their traditions and God Himself by claiming Caesar as the only one they claim allegiance to. This had happened in the time of Samuel when the people demanded a king to rule over them just as all the other nations had.

This rejection of Jesus also fulfilled prophecy: Isaiah 49:7 - "Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and His Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth." And Isaiah 53:3, "We hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not." This rejection also had tragic consequences for the entire nation within one generation (A.D. 70).

In 27:24-25 of his own Gospel, Matthew records that Pilate washed his hands before them, as if to say that he is innocent of shedding the blood of one he would not condemn, but put total blame on the Jews. Their response was prophetic - "His blood be on us, and on our children."

Lesson XXXV continued

Verse 16. Pilate turned Jesus over to the Jews to carry out the sentence of crucifixion. A group of Roman soldiers was given the task of carrying out the actual execution. They led Him away as a lamb to the slaughter; there was no resistance. To this hour was He sent by the Father to pay the price for our sins, that we might be reconciled to God.

Verse 17. Jesus, bearing His cross, was taken to Golgotha, the place of the skull, without the city. This was part also of the law of sacrifices as in Leviticus 16:27. John does not mention Simon of Cyrene being compelled to bear His cross (Matthew 27:32). Some have suggested that Golgotha (Hebrew) or Calvary (the Gentile name) referred to an outcropping of rock on one side of the hill that resembled the face of a skull. Appropriate to the place of death for our Saviour.

Again we see Jesus making no resistance. He was neither dragged, nor driven to the place; He walked willingly.

Verse 18. Two others were crucified at the same time - one on either side of Jesus. This form of execution was not that of the Jews - theirs was stoning. This was the Roman form - but for only the worst of criminals, the slowest and most painful way to die. Because of our sin, this was the punishment we deserve. Because Jesus took our place, He paid the price for our sin, which was His death.

The entire sacrificial system of the Jewish nation, instituted by God, involved the shedding of blood and death of animals to cover man's sin. All was temporary. But they were to cause the Jews to understand the penalty of sin, and at the same time point to the necessity of God sending His Son as the sacrifice for their sin. This is most clearly seen in the Day of Atonement. A bull was killed and the blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat within the Holy of Holies by the High Priest to cover the sins of the people for another year. This Jesus would do by offering Himself as the sacrifice and taking His blood to the Heavenly Temple, offering it to God as High Priest.

The other best example is the Passover - where the blood of a lamb without blemish was spread on the wooden door posts of each Jewish family's house. This would spare them from death. This is why Jesus, called the Lamb of God, also without blemish was killed, His blood spread upon the wooden posts of the cross. These are called types, or foreshadowing, all pointing to the purpose and fulfillment of the Sacrifice of Jesus for our redemption in the fullness of time as ordained by God, before the foundation of the world.

Many details of the crucifixion were recorded about 1,000 years earlier in Psalm 22. Isaiah 53 also recorded that Jesus was accounted as a vile criminal at His death. These few examples do not include the great multitude of prophecies in the Old Testament that point to the sacrifice of God's Christ.

Lesson XXXV continued

Verses 19-22. Pilate wrote a title, a sign that was placed above the head of Jesus on the cross which read, "Jesus of Nazareth The King of the Jews." That Jesus was now called King in His death, the Jewish leaders could not tolerate. That it was written in the three common languages of the time meant that everyone whether Jew, Greek, or Roman could read it. This was a further insult to them.

Since this place of execution was near the city and along a path, it was used by many travelers going and coming from the city. As they were passing by a number of Jews read the title and dutifully reported it to the chief priests. They in turn went to Pilate to get him to change the sign. They wanted it to say that Jesus "claimed" to be King of the Jews. In their judgment, a false claim. We can only imagine what Pilate was thinking about these men, as they again come to him making demands. He had more than enough of them. He had written the title to insult them. It would stand. They had rejected their king, but Pilate had written what God wanted - acknowledging Jesus as King.

That it was written in 3 languages so everyone could read it points back to the confusion of tongues at Babel. The Jewish language was first - the language of religion; second Greek, the language of science, culture, and philosophy; third Latin, the language of law and government. Jesus is king over all - the whole creation, knowing all, and the righteous judge.

Verses 23,24. We return to the scene of crucifixion. The 4 soldiers have finished their job of nailing Jesus to the cross, placing the sign at the top, then lifting the cross up, the bottom sliding into a hole that secured it upright. It seems that it was a long-standing custom for executioners to claim the clothing of whom they executed. This also implies that those crucified were naked. Everything was taken from Him as a sheep before the shearers, as a lamb to the slaughter, without spot or blemish.

The soldiers divided the clothes into four piles, one for each. It seems that some garments were ripped into pieces so as to divide everything equally. His coat, on the other hand, had no seams, being woven in one piece. They chose to cast lots for it, rather than destroy it, trying to tear it.

This reminds us, that after Adam sinned he was clothed by God. Here the sinless One was unclothed by sinful men. John records these details that were prophesied 1,000 years before by David in Psalm 22. This shows that all this was in God's plan from the beginning. What He planned, He would also see carried out to each and every detail. Contrary to man's plans and predictions, only God's come to pass 100 percent: what, who, when, where, and how.

From Genesis 3:15 onward every prophecy has come to pass, except the ones that are yet future. There are approximately 3 times the number of prophecies concerning Christ's Second Coming than concerning His first. Christ's coming in glory is the very crown God will put upon His creation, where everything will be

Lesson XXXV continued

made perfect for eternity. Every word that God has written will accomplish that for which He purposed. His word reveals the truth in Christ Jesus, Our Lord and Saviour. Reading Psalm 22 would at this point be greatly beneficial in dramatically seeing so many details of the crucifixion recorded over 1,000 years before. Amen.



Lesson XXXVI

John 20:1-10. Sunday Morning.

"1 The first day of the week cometh Mary Mag'dalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

2 Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.

3 Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre.

4 So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre.

5 And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in.

6 Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie,

7 and the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.

8 Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed.

9 For as yet they knew not the Scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.

10 Then the disciples went away again unto their own home."

Brief outline:

Mary Magdalene goes to the tomb

After seeing the stone rolled away, she tells Peter and John

They run to the tomb, go in and observe the grave clothes

They return home

First, let us look at some of the Old Testament prophecies that speak of this event.

Beginning in the book of beginnings, Genesis 3:15, the Seed of the woman was to crush the serpent's head, after His heel was bruised. The bruising of the heel points to Christ's death, as not permanent - that coming back to life was the crushing of the serpent's head. This was a victory over satan.

The death of the first world, as the ark passed through the waters of Judgment unto the cleansed earth, was a foreshadow of the same event.

The deliverance of Isaac from sacrifice - after three days of Abraham having been called upon by God to offer him up was like receiving him back from the dead (Hebrews 11:19).

The people of Israel passed through the Red Sea on ground, three days after the offering up of the Passover Lamb.

Jonah, after three days in the whale's belly, is brought back to land alive, also points to Christ's deliverance from the tomb on the third day.

Psalm 16:10,11. "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hades;

Lesson XXXVI continued

neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life."

In Old Testament times the Sabbath was a memorial of God's finished work in creation (Genesis 2:3; Exodus 20:11). In the New Testament, the first day of the Week commemorates the day of a new creation in Christ's Resurrection.

Verse 1. Before sunrise of Sunday morning, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb. Mark adds that two other women went with her - Mary, mother of James, and Salome (16:1,2). John centers on Mary Magdalene as the most fervent one who showed her intensity of emotion by being the first one to go. It was very early; an earthquake had recently (Matthew 28:2) shaken the area, and Roman Soldiers had been placed to guard the tomb (Matthew 27:66). She braved all things that would normally keep someone from venturing out. Certainly Jesus had done a great miracle of mercy in casting 7 demons from her (Luke 8:2). She had great love for Him without doubt.

When she came near the tomb she saw the stone already rolled away from the entrance. Matthew informs us that an angel of the Lord was sent to do this and then sat upon the stone (Matthew 28:2). This has been described as the Father's sign of approval of the Resurrection. This also demonstrates that the tomb was empty - and anyone could easily look into and verify.

Verse 2. When Mary Magdalene realized that the tomb was empty, she immediately ran back to the city to inform Peter and John that someone had taken Jesus' body from the tomb. She was very upset because she did not know who took Him, and where they took Him. Apparently, she, when first noticing the stone rolled away, immediately turned and ran to tell the two apostles seen to have been closest to Jesus during His ministry and His trials and crucifixion. Obviously they were together, most likely at John's home in Jerusalem. John had been looking after Peter after his denial of Jesus and his repentance. When she found them, her message was limited to what she and the other women had seen. It had not occurred to her that Jesus had risen - but only that two or more people had taken the body to some other location, though Jesus had repeatedly spoken of His death and resurrection on the third day. So do we all tend to live by sight and not by faith in the absolute truth of God's Word, which includes His promises to every believer.

Verse 3. Once the message was delivered - that the stone had been rolled away, Peter and John immediately set off for the tomb. Mary had not actually looked into the tomb; they must go themselves to investigate the scene. According to Mosaic law, a woman could not bear witness. The truth had to be established by at least two men. They could not contain their excitement at this news. They must go immediately.

Lesson XXXVI continued

Verse 4. Their desire to find out caused them to run the whole way. John, being the younger, outran Peter and got to the sepulchre first. In their nervous excitement, many different thoughts were probably running through their minds, among them being Christ's promise of their sorrow turning into joy. That John lived about 60 years after this, certainly suggests his being the younger of the two.

Verse 5. Though he arrived first, John yet hesitated to go in. He did stoop down and look into the chamber, and saw the burial wrappings lying there. Though why he waited for Peter to go in first, we are not told. It seems obvious that it was in deference to Peter being the elder, because shortly he would also go in.

Verses 6,7. When Peter gets there, he immediately goes in. He cannot be content with merely peering in. It has been pointed out that each believer may react in a different way to the same circumstance. Different - not right or wrong. John glanced in, but Peter looked carefully, studying every detail. What he saw was an orderly placing of the linen wrapping where the body had lain, and the cloth that covered the head, folded and placed nearby. Nothing had happened in haste or disorder.

Verse 8. When John then entered the tomb he records that he saw and believed. The grave clothes that had been wrapped around the body of Jesus were in the same condition - minus the body. We are reminded of the raising of Lazarus where after being raised, he still had to be loosed from his wrappings. Christ's body was gone. The grave clothes were left behind. Jesus must have passed out of them.

If followers had taken Jesus' body, they would not have unwrapped the body. If enemies had taken the body - first unwrapping it, they would have naturally and in haste, made a mess of it and would leave things strewn about.

John draws the conclusion - Jesus arose from the dead, leaving the linen as it was.

Verse 9. Though Jesus had repeatedly told them about His future resurrection, they had not taken it in. Their thinking could not realize or accept this part of Christ's teaching. They were words they had heard, but to experience their coming to pass had a completely different impact. They involved understanding or enlightenment, so much more than a simple statement of a fact.

They had not studied or been taught any of the prophecies and types and foreshadowing throughout the Old Testament about the absolute certainty of the resurrection.

Verse 10. We can only imagine a beginning of understanding of what they have just seen, a spark of that joy which would grow into a burning fire when Jesus later appeared to them. At this

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time they did not know what else to do but go back home. How could they possibly have but a tiny understanding of what they had seen? No one else in all of history had seen what they had, nor could they understand the reality of a divine resurrection and all the implications of what that would include. After all, they were just like us, only human.

Next, The Risen Jesus Appears to His Own.

Lesson XXXVII

John 20:11-23. The Risen Christ Appearing to His Own. First to Mary then to the Apostles.

"11 ¶ But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre,

12 and seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

13 And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.

14 And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

15 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

16 Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabbo'ni; which is to say, Master.

17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

18 Mary Mag'dalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.

19 ¶ Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

20 And when he had so said, he showed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.

21 Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.

22 And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:

23 whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained."

Just as no human eye could see God placing upon Jesus on the cross the iniquity of us all, making Him an offering for sin, only God could bear witness of the eternal redemption paid for by that death. Also no one was to see Jesus being raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father (Romans 6:4). Scripture also records Jesus saying that He would lay down His life that He would take it up again (John 10:17) that when the temple of His body was destroyed, in three days He would raise it up.

Now the risen Christ was to appear unto His own. In what manner He chose to do this shows much consideration of their frailty, in sorrow and confusion. This was only added to by the reports of the empty tomb. We see Jesus revealing Himself by degrees, that each one's mind might be prepared in relation to their own capacity to take it in without shock or fear.

Lesson XXXVII continued

According to all Scriptural accounts, there were 11 occurrences up to and including the ascension.

- First to Mary Magdalene alone (John 20:14).
- Second to the group of women coming back from the tomb (Matthew 28:9,10).
- Third to Peter alone (Luke 24:34).
- Fourth to the two disciples walking to Emmaus (Luke 24:13).
- Fifth to 10 apostles in the upper room (John 20:19).
- Sixth to the ten plus Thomas (John 20:26-29).
- Seventh to 7 disciples fishing at Tiberias (John 21).
- Eighth to the apostles and possible others (Matthew 28:16).
- Ninth to more than 500 at once (I Corinthians 15:7).
- Tenth to James (I Corinthians 15:7).
- Eleventh to the apostles and possibly other disciples on the Mount of Olives at His Ascension (Acts 1).
- Twelfth to Stephen (Acts 7).
- Thirteenth to Saul on the Damascus Road (Acts 9).
- Fourteenth to John on Patmos (Revelation 1), the final one.

Some have seen great significance in this number. Fourteen being 2 sevens. In Scripture, seven is the number of perfection (7 days of creation week, etc.), and 2 of witness. Thus Jesus bore His own perfect witness to His victory over death.

The verses we are now considering deal with the first and fifth of the appearances of the Risen Lord.

The first was a woman alone, one who had been under the control of 7 of satan's demons. Christ had shown His divine authority by casting out the demons, and now He revealed Himself as victor over death, satan, and the grave.

Verse 11. Apparently, after John and Peter had run to the tomb, made their observations, and went back to John's home, Mary had returned to the tomb without speaking to them. She stood weeping outside the tomb. She dearly loved Jesus but was only thinking about the tomb being empty - and not realizing the joy that it suggested. Then, still crying, she stooped down and looked into the tomb.

Verse 12. She sees two angels (in white glistening robes) - one sitting at the head, one at the foot, of where the body of Jesus had lain. Note: one angel at each end of the mercy seat of the ark of the covenant (Exodus 25:18,19). This is the only mention of angels in John's Gospel. Mary is speechless.

Verse 13. One of the angels asks her why she is crying. It has been suggested that she thought the body was only laid here until after the Sabbath, when, those that placed it here would carry it to a more proper and permanent place. This seems to have been her only concern - now stated as "My Lord" where before she had said "the Lord". She still only wants to know where "they"

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(being disciples) have placed the body in another tomb. She was so completely preoccupied with this thought that she is not distracted by the presence of the angels - who seem to offer no help in her need. Matthew, Mark, and Luke record the words of the angels concerning Christ having risen (Matthew 28:5-7).

Verse 14. Having finished speaking and no help found, she turns as in readiness to go back to Jerusalem. But still stooping, she now notices a figure standing. Her eyes still blurry from crying and her mind still preoccupied with one concern, she does not immediately recognize Jesus. She was not expecting to see one living who she thought still dead.

Verse 15. These are the first words of the Risen Christ: "Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?" He knew of her grief and the reason of it. He knew she had lost the most important person in her world. In asking her "who" she sought, He wanted her to look up and see who was standing before her. She assumed that He was the caretaker, being in that place at that time. So she asked the same question, if He has moved the body, tell her where and she will take over the care of the body. In her response - she does not answer Christ's question of who, she assumes that He would naturally know that she could only be talking about the momentous events of the last few days and the burial of Jesus in Joseph's Tomb, in the garden. In her preoccupation, her determination in deepest love, she feels strong enough to be able to carry away and take care of the body, by herself. Still looking down and waiting in hope for a positive response, we imagine a pause.

Verse 16. "Jesus saith unto her, Mary." We can only try to understand the tender call of her name that she had often heard Jesus say to her: here she recognizes that voice filled with love and concern. Whatever worry she had was now dispelled, whatever burden of sorrow, now lifted. She now sat up straight, looking into His face and saying "Master," or Rabboni or Teacher. In all her fervent and single-minded search for the body, she is the first one Jesus appears to. In her joyful surprise, we imagine her, as some of the women in Matthew 28:9 held Him by the feet and worshipped Him, also doing this. A most natural show of affection.

Verse 17. Jesus advises her not to cling to Him now, that He has a task for her - she must deliver His message to the disciples. The message was that He was going to ascend, in a little while, to His Father Who is now also their Father, His God and now also their God. Before He ascends, He will appear to them, as He had to Mary, and dispel all their confusion, and show certain proof of His Risen Deity.

Verse 18. Here Mary brings more fantastic news to the disciples. She told them that she had not only seen Him, but that

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He had given her a message for them. Mark 16:11 records that the disciples were still deeply distracted by their own grief, and did not believe her. They thought that that she, in her own troubled mind, had imagined the whole thing.

John omits the appearance of our Lord to the other women who came from the tomb recorded in Matthew 28:9, and to the two men who were walking to Emmaus in Luke 24:13, which also happened this same day.

Verse 19. This same day, after sundown, it was possibly around 8 p.m. The disciples had gotten together most likely excitedly discussing the various reports of the day. The doors were shut for fear of the Jews. Considering what they had done to Jesus, they had a reasonable anxiety of being next to experience the anger and hatred of these men (especially if they thought the disciples were spreading rumors about Jesus' being raised from the dead).

In describing the appearance of Jesus, John records what he witnessed. Jesus came and stood in their midst. This included the 11 apostles, minus Thomas, who was apparently absent (according also to Luke 24:33). John does not describe the exact manner in which Jesus got into the room, some have described it as His glorified body having the ability to come through closed doors, others have suggested the normal manner of opening then quickly closing the doors.

Obviously, John's chief concern was not in the manner of entering, but in the appearance and message Jesus brought. Other information and descriptions make it clearer that Jesus' body had not been raised back into a material form that would again die, but was transformed unto a glorified body made for eternity (which Paul later describes in greater detail). He had the power to appear to whatever material extent was necessary to be perceived, and to communicate what was essential. This was for the disciples to be completely convinced of the absolute truth that Jesus is the Risen Saviour.

Jesus speaks the traditional greeting of "Shalom", or, "peace be unto you". But under these unique circumstances, this greeting had unique meaning. Peace was the one thing the disciples had not been experiencing since the crucifixion. The living presence of Jesus was the only thing that could possibly bring their confused and fearful hearts the peace they needed.

Verse 20. Then Jesus showed the wounds to His hands and His side. That these marks were easily seen gave the disciples indisputable evidence that this could only be the crucified, now risen Lord.

Luke describes that at first they believed not for joy (24:41) but their joy became full as they saw the Lord. All doubt was destroyed.



Lesson XXXVII continued

Verse 21. Jesus saw that they were truly His again as He read their hearts' and faces' joy. Jesus again offers them "Peace". The first "Peace" was for the restoring of their personal confidence in the reality of His presence (the fact of His Resurrection). This second "Peace" was in preparing them for the mission He was going to send them on.

Jesus fulfilled the historical work given Him by the Father, but the word "hath" indicates that this work had ongoing, even perpetual effects. This was to be continued by the disciples. They were to be sent out as messengers of the "Good News" of what Christ has done for the salvation of all men.

Verse 22. Just as God breathed life into Adam as the first man, here Jesus breathes into the disciples as the communication of the new, spiritual life of the re-created man. Breath is the emblem of the Holy Spirit. This gift was once for all. The presence of the new life given them by the Risen Christ was the necessary prerequisite for the descent and abiding of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. This has been called the quickening, the other the endowing with power, one to the Resurrection, the other to the Ascension, one to victory, the other to sovereignty, the first "with" the other "within". Without the divine breathing there is no light or spiritual life within anyone.

Verse 23. The disciples were sent to spread the Good News of reconciliation. Those who accepted the gift of Christ's sacrifice, their sins were remitted or taken away; those who rejected their message remained under condemnation. The disciples and the church generally, down through the ages, had responsibility to discern the spiritual condition of those within their sphere of influence. This may also include the application of discipline within the church when a member was openly involved in some sin, thereby requiring judgment and confrontation, hoping for reconciliation. Otherwise condemnation and rejection from fellowship.

Next, Thomas called Didymus (the twin).

Lesson XXXVIII

John 20:24-31 + 21:1-14.

"24 ¶ But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Did'ymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.

26 ¶ And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.

27 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing.

28 And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.

29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

30 ¶ And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:

31 but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."

Verse 24. All the preceding took place when Thomas, the twin, was not present.

Verse 25. When he arrived, they proceeded to relate to him their experience with the Risen Christ. He is unable to accept their words. That the whole group expresses the same experience, these closest followers of Jesus, does not convince him. He goes so far from reason that he says that he will not even be satisfied by sight. He had to set his own measure, his own requirements of evidence. He demands that he must put his finger in the holes made by the nails, and put his hand into the wound made by the spear in His side. An obstinate and presumptuous attitude.

Verse 26. Apparently the disciples met weekly, and eight days later from His first appearing, Jesus again appeared at their meeting. This time, Thomas was rightly in attendance. As before, the doors were shut, and Jesus appeared in their midst. The same greeting was voiced - that of Peace.

Verse 27. Jesus addresses Thomas directly, knowing the stipulations he had stated that his belief in the Risen Christ would depend on. In great condescension He offers His hands to Thomas, that he might place a finger through the nail holes, and that he might thrust his hand into Christ's wounded side. This may be imagined, as a mild rebuke of the doubt Thomas had so boldly stated. We may also imagine that this dramatic and personal offer to Thomas made it totally unnecessary for him to follow through

Lesson XXXVIII continued

with his demands for belief. Jesus makes the offer that Thomas' faith be founded on what he could both see and touch.

Verse 28. It seems obvious that Thomas was now completely convinced without having to carry out his own demands of proof. His response is immediate in complete reverence. He calls Jesus his Lord, as the Master he has followed for years, but he adds "and my God." This shows his true recognition of the divinity of Jesus. He was the first one to call Jesus, "God". What he may have doubted before is completely eclipsed by the glorious appearing of the Risen Saviour. It may be beneficial to consider why Thomas called the Risen Saviour, "my God". When Jesus appeared to him, what he saw made his previously stated requirements of proof of touch obsolete. Also, the fact that Jesus knew of these doubting demands reminds him of Jesus' divine knowledge - and of Jesus' personal compassion for his doubting by offering himself to Thomas for investigation. But when Thomas saw Jesus, he had no need for further investigation. What he saw was not someone raised from the dead, in the sense of brought back to life (as was Lazarus), only to die at a later time. Jesus was raised into life eternal, His body transformed from corruption into incorruption, a spiritual body, but bearing the form of the earthly body, having flesh and bones, but without blood.

This is unique in the entire history of the world - a new creation, first fruits from the dead. Not just a temporary victory over death, but a triumphant translation unto life eternal, where death cannot come, being destroyed forever. It was this glorified body that Thomas saw and believed - not just a body raised from the dead, but a person transformed unto a spiritual form, which could only happen by the power of God. The Son of God now is recognized as truly God, worthy of all adoration and worship.

This was the culmination and purpose of John's Gospel - that we also would come to the realization that Jesus is God the Son, that He had revealed to men God, His Father, and God the Holy Spirit would continue to reveal the Gospel to men through the written Word of God, and unite all believers by dwelling within them - a work begun, not to end, but continue eternally. All the disciples from here onward also show Jesus the utmost respect, realizing that this was no longer the familiar human Saviour that they had been so close to. It is essential to notice that Jesus, in replying to Thomas' statement, does not disagree, or say that Thomas' calling Him God, was improper.

Verse 29. Jesus described Thomas' believing as having resulted from sight and Thomas is blessed as a believer. Jesus goes on to say that those that have not seen and yet believed are no less blessed. The witness of the apostles, when accepted, brings the believer the very same blessing that the apostles enjoyed. This is the working out of The Father's economy of grace.

Verses 30,31. John mentions that the signs that he has

Lesson XXXVIII continued

recorded were not the only ones Jesus did in the presence of His disciples. They were the most important and necessary ones that would benefit the future readers of his book. He did many other signs for the personal benefit of those disciples then gathered in His name. John has written these to bear witness to the complete truth of the Risen Saviour being God, the promised Messiah. Through belief in Christ as the Son of God, every believer will have life eternal, united with God the Father, as Jesus revealed Him.

John closes His Gospel clearly stating his purpose. This was to produce life-giving faith in the only human being to live a life of righteousness, fulfilling God's law perfectly, the promised Christ. And that He is the very Son of God. Only He could be the perfect sacrifice to pay for all mankind's sins and offer forgiveness through His death. But also that we may have a new power of life in fellowship with Him, now and forever.

## Chapter 21:1-14.

"1 After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tibe'ri-as; and on this wise showed he himself.

2 There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Did'ymus, and Nathan'a-el of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zeb'edee, and two other of his disciples.

3 Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing.

4 ¶ But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore; but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus.

5 Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No.

6 And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.

7 Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea.

8 And the other disciples came in a little ship, (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes.

9 ¶ As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.

10 Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught.

11 Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, a hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken.

12 Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord.

Lesson XXXVIII continued

13 Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise.

14 This is now the third time that Jesus showed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead."

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It has been suggested that this account of Jesus appearing to the disciples in Galilee was added because of the circulation of the saying of Jesus concerning John himself (verse 23). John considers it essential to relate the details of the circumstances where it was said. Only John recorded this occasion.

John first describes Jesus meeting with the group of disciples, and describes their responsibilities, and His gift (1-14).

Second, Jesus addresses individual disciples, describing their tasks (15-23).

The final two verses reaffirm the writer of the Gospel and the uncountable works of Jesus that had not been recorded (24,25).

Verse 1. An indefinite time later, Jesus chose to appear again to the disciples; this time in Galilee at the sea also known as the Sea of Tiberias. Matthew mentions their return to Galilee in 28:7. Mark in 16:7. Luke only notes the appearances in Jerusalem. John introduces his narrative by saying, this is the way He showed Himself.

Verse 2. The list of those present includes Simon Peter and Thomas; Nathanael of Cana hints at a connection to the wedding where Jesus turned the water into wine. The sons of Zebedee (James and John) and two others.

Verse 3. Peter again takes the lead. The disciples seem to have returned to Capernaum or Bethsaida to wait for the next appearance of the Risen Lord as He had told them to wait for Him in Galilee. What better to do while waiting than going back to his familiar job - as fisherman. A worthy occupation that should at least provide a meal. When Peter suggests this, the rest readily go along. It is quite possible that those in whose care Peter had left all his fishing equipment would respect his wish to use it again. They all got aboard the ship, fished all night, and caught nothing. That they caught nothing was unusual, it being normally the best time for fishing. This providentially set the stage for what Jesus was about to do.

Verse 4. Now morning, Jesus stood on the shore. The disciples could not see that it was Jesus, being a distance away.

Verse 5. Jesus calls out to them to get their attention - asking in the way of someone wanting to buy of their catch. Their reply is simply no.

Lesson XXXVIII continued

Verse 6. Jesus had already known the answer. He advises them to cast on the right side and they will find what they had labored all night to find without His help. When they followed His direction, the net could not hold all of the fish. A smaller number would be drawn up into the boat, but this amount had to be dragged by the boat up to the shore.

Verse 7. So busy were they all with the business of net and fish, that only John was able to realize that this was truly an occurrence only possible through his beloved Lord. Indeed it was a bounty that Jesus had given a few times before. John then told Peter - "It is the Lord." He got so excited he could not wait for the boat's slow progress. Being stripped to the waist for work, he now grabs his upper garment and put it on to more respectfully greet his Master - and he jumped in the water and proceeds ashore. It is obvious that it was shallow enough for him to do this without having to swim. The distance was about 300 feet to shore. He would not have put on his coat if he had to swim any distance.

Verse 8. The other disciples proceeded to shore, rowing the boat (now described as small) and dragging the net full of fish. At this distance, it would not take them long to reach shore. Closer to shore some may have also jumped in the water, to more easily pull boat and fish to land.

Verse 9. As they came to shore, they see a charcoal fire with fish laid on it, and a loaf of bread beside. Whether they were provided naturally, or supernaturally is not the most important thing. John wastes no time, though commenters down the centuries have come down on both sides of the question in great detail.

Verse 10. Jesus tells them to bring some of the fish they have caught. Always with purpose Jesus has a lesson to teach them about the gift He has provided.

Verse 11. Peter went to help bring the net full of fish to land. The fish were large - and counted 153. In spite of the size and amount, it is noted that not one was lost, which would have happened if the net had broken. The fact that the fish were counted seems a natural part of fisherman's work. Since earliest times, much has been speculated about the significance of the number 153 - adding many spiritual speculations. Also, comparing the event with the miraculous draught of fish at the beginning of Christ's ministry in Luke V:1, has filled many lines in the early Fathers' comments. There are possibly many spiritual meanings in the variations of the two narratives. That could be a subject for a separate study.

Verse 12. Jesus tells them to come to breakfast. They apparently yet stood a small distance from Him. They knew who it was, yet He was different - they did not ask who He was, knowing

Lesson XXXVIII continued

it was the Risen Lord.

Verse 13. Jesus comes to them with the bread and gives some to each, then also adds fish in the same manner. No further mention of the caught fish, or whether Jesus joined in the meal is written.

He is portrayed as the Provider of the gift of the food, as well as the Preparer and the Giver of the food unto them personally. His provision to His own continues and is as certain as His Resurrection.

Verse 14. The most obvious understanding of this verse is that Jesus appeared to the disciples as gathered together in a group three times (including this time).

Next, Jesus and Individual Disciples.

Lesson XXXIX

John 21:15-25 + Wrap-up. The work of Peter and John.

"15 ¶ So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jona, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

16 He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jona, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jona, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

18 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.

19 This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.

20 ¶ Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?

21 Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do?

22 Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.

23 Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?

24 ¶ This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true.

25 ¶ And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen."

These only recorded by John.

This has been called the apostolic charge (verses 15-17), and the final issue (verses 18,19).

Verse 15. When the disciples had finished eating, Jesus calls upon Peter. He addresses him as Simon, the son of Jonas (or John). Though Jesus gave him the surname Cephas (or Peter) in Chapter 1:42, He does not address him by the new name. On the other hand, in the Gospel narratives the surname is commonly used by itself or with Simon. John is careful to record the exact words of Jesus, who in calling him Simon, Son of Jonas, calls attention to Peter's human descent. This was in contrast to what Jesus was calling upon him to do as the apostle.



Lesson XXXIX continued

Jesus asks if Peter loves Him more than the other disciples present. Certainly this refers back to Peter's former profession of great devotion in chapter 8:37. Jesus' question shows that the foundation of being an apostle is based upon love and not faith, love not being apart from faith, but necessarily including it.

Peter simply answers, "Yea, Lord." He does not directly answer Jesus' question. He does not claim any greater devotion than the others', only stating what he can be certain of within his own heart. No boasting here. No claim of future action. Peter's recent experience had dramatically forced Peter to distrust his own assessment of himself. He therefore also bases his answer on Jesus' divine insight into Peter's true confession.

Jesus then charges him to feed His lambs. This means the direct providing of food to the young of the faith. Jesus has accepted Peter's answer, and gives him this work of love to perform. Peter had first been called to be a fisher of men. Now those must be fed and tended to. He is now a shepherd called upon to support the little ones in Christ's flock.

Verse 16. We imagine a short pause, allowing for reflection upon the preceding words.

Then Jesus asks the identical question, but dropping the comparison with others. Peter gives an identical answer. Then Jesus tells him to "tend" to His sheep (a different word from the preceding one in verse 15). Jesus again calls upon Peter to be shepherd to His sheep - who needed guidance and watchful care as more mature Christians. This would require greater understanding and skill, than feeding the youngest ones.

Verse 17. Jesus addresses the question the third time. This obviously made Peter recall the three times he had denied Jesus, after having boasted of his true devotion. Peter was grieved that this third time would suggest that he might not be trusted to be telling the truth.

In his reply, Peter does not restate his former affirmation of "Yea, Lord." He depends completely on his faith in Jesus' absolute insight. Since Jesus knows all things and at that moment Jesus can see into his heart that he loves Him. Jesus accepts this answer and charges him the third time. He again uses the word feed, used in verse 15, but now with sheep rather than lambs. This emphasizes that believers of all spiritual ages or maturity need provision for continued support as well as continued and careful guidance.

It is important to notice that all three times those committed to Peter's care remain Christ's own flock. All Christ asked Peter to do was always based upon his own loving relationship with Him.

Verse 18. Now that Jesus had dramatically given Peter the role he was to play in the beginning church, He goes on here to give him indication of how his life would be when he was old.

Lesson XXXIX continued

He opens by again repeating His introduction of the importance of what He is about to say. He contrasts the freedom Peter had enjoyed in his youth to the bondage he would face when older. In addition, he would be taken where he would never choose to go.

History recorded the Roman custom to yoke a convicted criminal with their hands tied to the ends of the yoke, then lead them through the city to the place of crucifixion.

It has been suggested that Peter would then be the most mature spiritually, and therefore have the freedom to give his life for his Lord. History also records Peter's martyrdom at Rome in 64 A.D. Church tradition describes Peter as being crucified upside-down, not feeling worthy to be crucified in the same manner as Jesus.

Verse 19. Peter's death would glorify God because he would not renounce his faith and was put to death because he remained faithful to his Saviour and Lord. Now knowing his future martyrdom, Jesus calls upon Peter to follow Him. These same words Jesus had said during His earthly ministry - that those He called should give up their occupations and duties and go with Him, no matter the circumstances that they would face. To follow Him now required an understanding of the mission of spreading the Gospel and tending the resulting flock. This was also in recognition that the world had rejected and killed the Saviour, and would persecute and quite likely also kill those who followed Him. Peter accepts these words without reply.

In our day, it appears that persecution is in the process of coming back.

Verse 20. Peter, having just been told of his own future, is curious about that of his close companion, identified as the disciple who leaned on Jesus' breast at the Last Supper, and asked who was going to betray Him. His usual description of himself as the disciple whom Jesus loved is also repeated.

Verse 21. Peter asks Jesus what lies in the future for John. It is completely unnecessary to read into this any rivalry or other selfish motive.

Verse 22. Jesus responds - if he should remain alive until He returns - the idea of calm waiting until further revelation. John has a task that requires a period of time of maturation and distillation - possibly in the writing of his Gospel as well as his recording of Jesus' Revelation to him. This would be the last Message that Jesus had for His churches at that time and all those that would come after. It would also be the close of the canon of the New Testament Scripture.

More directly to Peter, Jesus suggests that to Peter all of John's future has no bearing on his own life and responsibility. He needs no distractions to take away his focus upon what He will

Lesson XXXIX continued

be called upon to do in his own life of ministry. His first and only concern must be to follow Jesus and the divine will of God will be carried out in the course of his life.

Verse 23. A misquote of this saying suggested to many that Jesus was suggesting that John would not die until Christ should return.

That this idea continued even after John died at Ephesus is seen in the church tradition that even in his grave, the dust moving above it was evidence that the saint was breathing beneath.

Verse 23. In refuting this misinterpretation, John could do no other but quote the exact words of Jesus. He makes no claim as to precisely what Jesus meant about the "till I come." It was only the yet future passage of time that would show the true meaning of what Jesus said.

Verse 24. A final affirmation of John as the disciple who bears testimony that what he wrote is the truth that he witnessed.

Verse 25. This is a hyperbole which, in using exaggeration, tries to convey the extent of something. In this case, the idea that if every one of the works of Jesus in His ministry had been written down, there would be an uncountable number of them. The Gospel ends with the single word Amen. This word was commonly used - direct from the Hebrew, as an affirmation, something firm, constant, and established. Someone who said this after a statement bound himself as to the truth of the statement.

Jesus began many of His teachings with either Amen by itself, or doubled. This is most often translated "Verily, verily". This underscores an introduction of an absolute and incontrovertible truth.

John did live to be in his nineties when Jesus gave him His Revelation of those things that are to come upon the earth, His return to earth in glory, the Millennium, and then the new heaven and new earth. John has finished his Gospel, including only the most important information to his purpose - that we would be brought to a certain and continuing faith in Jesus, the Son of God, who, in constant communion with the Father, came to earth to fulfill the law by being obedient to the will of the Father, after living a perfectly righteous life, gave His life as a ransom for all those that would be saved.

In his closing, he suggests that if he had tried to write everything he knew about Jesus, there would be no end to the books produced. If others also did this, the world would be full. In the Wisdom of God and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, John wrote with economy and at the same time with all essentials included to his purpose. We are here today as witnesses to the efficacy of his effort. We are also witnesses to the power of these words as Jesus described them: "They are spirit, and they are life." Jesus also foretold that many believers would come by believing John's

Lesson XXXIX continued

record, his eyewitness account. Without seeing, we have believed. Jesus calls us blessed and so we are.

My knowledge, faith, understanding, and appreciation of the Father's plan, The Son's willing gift of life for us, the continuing ministry of the Holy Spirit, has been greatly increased and strengthened. My greatest hope is that yours has also. May God bless us all, to continue to persevere that in the knowing about Christ, we may grow more like Him. Amen and Amen.

Next, the Ascension.

Lesson XL

The Ascension. Acts 1:1-14.

"1 The former treatise have I made, O The-oph'ilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,

2 until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen:

3 to whom also he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:

4 and, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.

5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

6 ¶ When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

9 And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

10 And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;

11 which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

12 ¶ Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Ol'ivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey.

13 And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Al'pheus, and Simon Zelo'tes, and Judas the brother of James.

14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren."

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As the Gospel of Luke closed with the return of the Risen Christ to glory, I thought it to be helpful to add this glorious event at the end of our study of John's Gospel. That he didn't include it, as before postulated, that a full account had already been recorded. He, being guided by the Spirit felt it not essential to his purpose. He had no need to be reminded of any of its aspects, since he had been there. We however, do need to be reminded, so we will look at the account Luke wrote in the first

Lesson XL continued

chapter of the Book of Acts of the Apostles.

Verse 1. This writing is also addressed to Theophilus, as was his gospel account which he mentions in the opening verse.

Verse 2-8. Luke describes the time after the resurrection when Jesus opened their understanding to the Old Testament Scriptures that had talked about His coming and gave them a portion of the Holy Spirit that would guide them in understanding and in making decisions concerning the establishment of Christ's Church, the rites and ordinances that were necessary.

Verse 3. He summarizes the "many infallible proofs" that within the 40 days after His resurrection Jesus had revealed Himself, alive and taught them many things about His Kingdom.

Verse 4. Having returned from Galilee, they assembled together, Jesus then joined them. He commanded them to remain in Jerusalem, and wait until His promise of the Gift of the Father of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost came to pass - which He had previously promised them. The promise of the Father in the Old Testament had been the coming sacrifice of the Messiah, the promise of the New Testament was the inspiration and indwelling of the Holy Spirit until He comes again. Example: the communion prayer: "Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen". Jesus had told them previously in John 14:16-26; 15:26; 16:7-15; and also in Galilee.

Verse 5. As John baptized with water, so they shall in similar form be baptized with the Holy Ghost in just a few days. The baptism of John was a sign of repentance, in relation to the remission of sin. The baptism of the Holy Ghost through Christ brings light to the heart and mind, and comfort to the soul.

Verse 6. Still thinking of worldly things, some asked Jesus if He would at that time restore the kingdom of Israel under God's power and authority, thus ridding them of the Roman yoke. Even as the Jews generally held this expectation of the Messiah's earthly role, so the disciples did also until the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit taught them the true spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom. Jesus had predicted the overthrow of the Jewish nation - as opposing God and His Christ. Was this the time of God again taking over the reign of His people through Christ?

Verse 7. Jesus mildly admonished them for trying to set dates. Dictates of times or seasons do not set limits to the infinite wisdom and discretion of the Father. He is the One Who decides and acts according to His own creative power and this includes any timetable He decides upon.

Lesson XL continued

Verse 8. Jesus brings them back to their own duty and ministry once the Holy Spirit indwells them. They are to be His witnesses, to carry the Good News of the Gospel ministry, beginning at Jerusalem, to continue to the furthest reaches of human civilization. This is the Great Commission.

Verse 9. After this Commission was given, while the disciples were looking at Him, Jesus was taken up, presumably among a heavenly host, until He was out of their sight in the clouds. Thus He returned to the home of the Father in the heavens.

Verse 10. As they continued to look up to where Jesus had gone, even after He was out of their sight, two men in white clothing appeared nearby (angels in human form, their white robes representing their purity and glory as God's messengers).

Verse 11. These angels ask why these disciples, mostly from Galilee, continue to look up into heaven where Jesus, by His sovereign power, has gone. They tell them that this same Jesus that they have watched go, will also return, in like manner. This took place about a mile from Jerusalem, at the border just past Bethphage in Bethany - also called a Sabbath's journey. The town of Bethany was a second Sabbath's day journey. The angels' message was that they need not continue to stay there looking up - but know that His return would in the same glorified manner, but at some future time - when He would be seen descending to the same place at the Mt. of Olives (or Olivet) - when He would be the judge, separating the sheep from the goats, to peace or condemnation.

Verse 12. The disciples then returned to Jerusalem about a Sabbath day's journey.

Verses 13,14. These disciples stayed together in an upper room. This seems to be the place where they had been continually meeting, in a private home - most likely John's - though this is not clearly recorded (not being an essential fact for faith). Also included were those devoted women and Mary, Jesus' mother and His brothers. These women no doubt included the wives of some of the apostles (Peter's wife has been mentioned elsewhere), as well as those who witnessed the Risen Christ and other pious women who had materially supported His ministry. They all remained there together praying and waiting upon the Lord to bless them unto the promise of power from on high to preach the Gospel, to share their faith, to begin and increase Christ's church unto all good works in loving one another and teaching all believers unto a fuller knowledge of the blessings of Jesus. Each child of God must grow in grace and mature, bearing the fruit of righteousness. In all their ways of living and speaking they were to win others to the greatest blessing - of the forgiveness of sin, bought by the precious blood of God's Messiah, Jesus the Christ, and to a life

Lesson XL continued

of thanksgiving and unselfish devotion to God the Father, through His Son. They are to share all blessings with their brethren in the Lord, and to reach out to others with the Good News offered to everyone, that some would believe on His Name and also partake of this precious Gift of God through His Son, Our Lord. Amen.



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# A Layman's Commentary On the Gospel of John

Composed In 40 Lessons

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We would all like to thank God for His Word and His small, still voice in the lonely hours.